This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Tappan Presbyterian Association
LIBRARY.

Presented by HON. D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.
From Library of Rev. Geo. Duffield, D.D.

BX
5200
P95
L7

Vindiciæ Prieſtleianæ:

AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE;

OCCASIONED BY

A LETTER to Dr. PRIESTLEY from a Perſon calling himſelf an UNDERGRADUATE, but publicly and uncontradictedly aſcribed to Dr. HORNE, Dean of Canterbury, and Preſident of Magdalen College, Oxford.

BY THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, A.M.
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Opinionum commenta delet dies: naturæ, deique, judicia confirmat.
CICERO.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD. M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

Gift
Tapp
2-
Presb. Hist
-1932

THE PREFACE.

THE idea of drawing up the following tract firſt aroſe from obſerving a ſtudied affectation in many perſons of treating Dr. Prieſtley's theological and metaphyſical writings with ſlight and contempt, and an endeavour in others particularly to infuſe the like ſentiments of him into the riſing generation: which laſt I could not but look upon as of pernicious conſequence, tending to prevent their acquaintance with a writer, from whoſe various works, above thoſe of any other in our own country, they might reap the greateſt advantage both in reſpect of uſeful knowlege and virtuous improvement.

I had no view therein, was I capable of it, of lending him any aid againſt the attacks made upon him, as if he were in danger of being overpowered by his opponents. For he is more than equal to a whole hoſt of them: which they have all experienced in their turns; biſhop Horſely, one of the moſt violent of them, the leaſt of all excepted. But I thought it might be poſſible for another to ſuggeſt ſome circumſtances, and to ſay certain things in his behalf, which he would never think of offering, and which indeed could not ſo properly come from himſelf; by which the edge of prejudice might be taken off, and a juſter eſtimate formed of him and his writings.

I am not however without hope, that I may be able to produce ſomething in confirmation of thoſe very important points, which he has been called out to defend. And if I ſhould not ſee others exactly in the ſame light with him, it will cauſe no breach or coolneſs in our friendſhip. For although he has no high opinion of Plato, as a metaphyſician, or theologian, he will approve

approve the good ſenſe of that apology of his for giving up his favourite Homer, *de Rep. l.* x. Καιτοι φιλια γε τις μι και αιδως εκ παιδος εχουσα περι ομηρου αποκωλυει λεγειν· ——, αλλ' ου γαρ προ γε της αληθειας τιμητεος ανηρ.

I am miſtaken, if many will not be ſurpriſed at a very *recent fact*, but little known, which I have had occaſion to mention, concerning the eccleſiaſtical authority exerciſed by the engliſh biſhops over the Americans, ſince they became independent of the civil power of this country. It will appear incredible to them, that in theſe enlightened times, the leading clergy ſhould ſeek to put the epiſcopalians upon that continent, under *harrows of iron*, and conſtrain them, as far as they could, to receive the ſpurious creed of Athanaſius, and to become ſhackled with other religious fetters, from which Tillotſon, Hoadley, Herring, &c. would have rejoiced to have delivered others, as well as to have been delivered themſelves.

Having been led to ſay ſomething concerning *the hiſtory of the fall*, I have ſpoken

without reſerve, and I truſt, not without ſome proof alleged, as much as I had room for, of the non-exiſtence of ſuch evil beings, as *the devil*, *ſatan*, and *demons* without end, mentioned in the ſcriptures. I have been informed that the apparent *(a)* letting looſe as it were of ſo many of theſe laſt, at the firſt preaching of the goſpel, was one of the principal things that contributed to make the ingenious *Rouſſeau* an unbeliever; as it ſeemed to him, with good reaſon, a thing quite out of nature, and probability. But a proper inquiry, and inveſtigation would have ſhewn him, that

(a) One is ſurprized that the learned *Jortin*, ſhould have paid ſo little attention to this ſubject, and to what Mede and Sykes had remarked upon it, (for Lardner and Farmer had not then publiſhed their ſentiments) as to fall into this ſtrange notion of demons having a greater licenſe than uſual to afflict mankind, in the age of the apoſtles. 'One reaſon, ſays he, 'for which the divine providence ſhould ſuffer ſpirits 'to exert their malignant powers ſo much at that time, might 'be to give a check to Sadduceiſm among the jews, and to 'epicurean atheiſm among the gentiles, and to remove in 'ſome meaſure theſe two impediments to the goſpel.' Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. i. p. 14. We may venture to pronounce, that no ſudducee, or epicurean atheiſt, was ever converted by ſuch *inſtrumentality*, and argument.

that there was no *phenomenon* of the kind at that time more than at any other; and that theſe things being mentioned by the ſacred writers is no proof of their reality. They expreſſed themſelves on theſe matters agreeably to the ſuperſtition of the times and their own prejudices. And ſo far is their repreſentation of things, however miſtaken therein, from invalidating the ſacred hiſtory, that it is a proof of its antiquity, and genuineneſs.

It would be no difficult taſk, by a few remarks interſperſed, and illuſtrations of the ſeveral paſſages of the bible, where the word *Satan*, &c. is named, to enable the commoneſt reader to ſee, that divine revelation gives no countenance to the exiſtence of any ſuch evil beings, or to any power but that of our benevolent creator being exerciſed over us. And I hope this will be conſidered, among many other things, in a new verſion of the bible, whenever it is undertaken without reſpect to any great churches, or parties in religion.

Some little merit I will take to myſelf in one thing, becauſe it is not my own, and I am merely concerned in it as a tranſlator; *viz.* in having produced to light the MS. of

Caſtellio's, publiſhed about thirty years ſince by Wetſtein, but never noticed that I know by any one ſince, in our own or any other country. It is ſo very free, that the editor ſeemed almoſt afraid of exhibiting it, leſt he ſhould give offence; as you will obſerve from his words in the margin (*b*), with which he introduces it. And yet the diſtinction that the author makes, between the ſeveral parts of the ſcriptures, and the different account we ought to make of each, is ſo juſt and full of good ſenſe; that every judicious perſon will approve it. I would add, that this incomparable critic will

(*b*) Animus etiam erat, ad examen revocare, quæ S. Caſtellio paulo ante obitum de interpretatione ſcripturæ in chartas conjecerat; cum vero nec libri ad manum ſint de arte hermeneutica ſcripti, quos cum ſyſtemate MS. conferrem, nec tantum otii nunc habeam, malui aliorum prius judicia experiri qui etiamſi forte aliter ſentiant atque clariſſimus ille ſcripturæ interpres, non ægre tamen ferent, ſpero, quæ cogitate meditatus eſt, a ſitu et interitu vindicata, ſecum communicari. Saltem quod ad me attinet, malim legere ſcriptum viri docti et pii, meæ ſententiæ oppoſitum, quam ſcriptum hominis mali et indocti pro mea ſententia editum. A tali adverſario ſemper aliquod diſcimus, &c. Wetſtein. N. T. vol. ii. p. 884.

will ſatisfy any one that is unprejudiced, that even greater liberties may be taken than Dr. Prieſtley or others have done, with relation to the characters and imperfect reaſonings in the ſcriptures, without hurting the evidence for the facts of the New Teſtament, or weakening the foundation of our faith, which reſts on the well authenticated miracles of Chriſt and his apoſtles, and his reſurrection from the dead.

Of the late *biſhop Butler* I had ſome little perſonal knowlege, not long before he was raiſed to the ſee of Durham; but had an opportunity of knowing more of his character from a correſpondence, which he had long kept up with a friend he highly reſpected, and to whom he communicated himſelf very freely. He had great piety, but it was of a gloomy caſt, and tending to ſuperſtition; which he might have caught from reading the lives of romiſh ſaints, ſome of which I was the means of handing to him. He always appeared diſſatisfied with the public ſtate of things and of the world; which might originate from his views of divine providence,

providence, that in his ſyſtem could certainly afford but little chearfulneſs to thoſe who throughly imbibed it. I hope it has been ſhewn, in the following work, that the opinion much inſiſted on by him, and which raiſes the moſt melancholy ſuſpicions of the deity, *viz. that repentance alone is not ſufficient to reſtore ſinful creatures to the favour of their maker*, is as void of foundation in ſcripture, as it is contrary to all rational ſentiments of the Divine Being, and to all juſt concluſions from reaſon and fact. What a door alſo does it open to the worſt ſuperſtition, to be told that a return to ſincere piety and virtue will not ſatisfy or appeaſe the divine diſpleaſure againſt ſin? What evil is there, which the opinion of God not being in his own nature placable, hath not cauſed, both in the chriſtian and pagan worlds?

It was tedious, though neceſſary, to repeat many things before noted, by myſelf and others, to ſhew what a miſtaken interpreter of ſcripture the Dean of Canterbury is in his printed Diſcourſes; from which I have made ſome few citations. But the change, (muſt not I call it!) which he

he has made in *the object of religious worſhip*, throughout the two volumes of his commentaries on the pſalms, will to many appear to exceed all belief; in his ſolemnly, and frequently, nay almoſt intirely addreſſing prayer to Jeſus Chriſt, by name, whom he alſo ſtiles, *God*, LORD *God*, LORD *of hoſts*, *God of Iſrael*. What will the unbeliever ſay to this, done by an approved high dignitary of the church-eſtabliſhed, when he looks into our ſacred books, and finds no ſuch God there?

N. B. I have juſt now been informed, [redacted], was [redacted] of the clerical aſſembly at Tenniſon's library, mentioned, p. 51. who united with others now alſo on the epiſcopal bench, to requeſt a reviſal of the articles and liturgy and forms of ſubſcription of the church; in the year 1772.

*** The ſecond propoſed part of this work, ſee p. 2. 3. is in good forwardneſs, and will in due time be laid before the public.

THE

CONTENTS.

SECTION I.

Deſign of the work. *Dr.* Prieſtley's *laudable motives in addreſſing the youth of the univerſities. The real author of the letter to him under the name of an undergraduate.* p. 1

SECTION II.

Subſcription to the creeds and articles of the church, a grievance long complained of. *Archbiſhop* Tillotſon's *wiſh concerning* Athanaſius's *creed. Curious hiſtory of a contrary temper in the preſent day.* *Of Mr.* Locke's *ſentiment.* *Of Dr.* Clarke's. *Of Mr.* Whiſton's. *The candid diſquiſitions. The clerical petitioners at the* Feathers. *Clerical aſſembly at* Tenniſon's *library.* *Of Dr.* Durell's *ſentiment.* *Of Biſhop* Lowth's. p. 14

SECTION III.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *character, as a philoſopher and theologian.* p. 60

SECTION IV.

Of the charges againſt Dr. Prieſtley for having no fixed creed.

Important truth not to be concealed. Offences wrongly taken at Dr. Prieſtley's *publication of the progreſs of his inquiries. Impartial inquirers have no fixed creed. Service of Dr.* Prieſtley's *writings to the cauſe of the goſpel. Reaſons of Dr.* Horne *not ſeeing this.* p. 71

SECTION V.

What is the juſt idea of the inſpiration *of the ſacred writers. The certain ground upon which we go in this way of conſidering it; and its advantages. Dr.* Horne's *error with reſpect to the particular inſpiration of the writer of the epiſtle to the hebrews.* p. 85

SECTION VI.

Moſes's *account of the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, much miſrepreſented through the bias of wrong religious ſyſtems. It is probable, according*

ing to Dr. Prieſtley's *conjecture, that he did not receive that account from a particular divine inſpiration. How it is to be interpreted. Juſtification of this way of interpretation, from ſimilar inſtances in ſcripture, eſpecially* Chriſt's *temptation. A farther confirmation of the probability, that* Moſes *drew up his hiſtory of the fall, in the manner here ſtated.* p. 99.

SECTION VII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *freedom in mentioning ſome defects in St.* Paul's *reaſoning, and in criticiſing other parts of ſcripture, countenanced by other chriſtians of acknowleged eminence; by* Eraſmus; Caſtellio; Luther; *Mr.* Whiſton; *Dr.* Durell. p. 116.

SECTION VIII.

Concerning the perſon of Chriſt.

The eternal God a feeble ſuffering man! How the minds of many are capable of being reconciled to ſuch a ſtrange aſſertion. Throughout the hebrew ſcriptures, Chriſt *uniformly ſpoken of as a man, a great prophet, who was to be born of a particular tribe and family among them. The jews*

jews expected him, and thoſe who received him, believed in him, in that character only. The three former evangeliſts, and Luke *in his ſecond treatiſe, never ſeem to have had a thought of* Chriſt *being any other than a man like themſelves, with extraordinary powers from God. The evangeliſt St.* John, *and the reſt of the writers of the N. T. do not differ from the preceding. A ſingular teſtimony to the ſpreading of this true doctrine concerning* Chriſt. *The teſtimony to it of the late Dr.* Le Courayer. p. 165.

SECTION IX.

Chriſt's *power neceſſarily limited. How far it is to be ſuppoſed, that he paſſed through childhood and youth, without any fault or breach of duty. That he was of a nature liable to fall into ſin, acknowleged by himſelf, and declared by his apoſtle. Of the limitations of* Chriſt's *knowlege, and the inſtances of it produced by Dr.* Prieſtley. p. 189.

SECTION X.

The ſufficiency of Chriſt *for his office of teacher and ſaviour of the world, does not depend upon his miraculous conception. Dr.* Prieſtley's *reaſons for*

for his opinion concerning it. How the queſtion is to be decided. p. 207.

SECTION XI.

Chriſt's *ſhedding of his blood, how to be underſtood. Sacrifices, their origin, and intent. Nothing done by* Chriſt *to atone for mens ſins, or to make God more favourable and propitious to them than he was before. Repentance is all that is neceſſary to recommend ſinners to the divine mercy and favour.* Chriſt's *Interceſſion, what intended by it.* p. 211

SECTION XII.

The late biſhop Butler's *great error, that repentance alone is not ſufficient to obtain pardon of God, without the interpoſition of* Jeſus Chriſt. *The melancholy deſcription given by him of the divine government. The ſources of his unhappy miſtake. His miſrepreſentation of the world we live in, and its inhabitants. God, and the world, men, and their expectations hereafter, far better than his ſyſtem would make them.* p. 237

SECTION XIII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *aſſertion, that men have no ſouls diſtinct from their bodies, concerns not at all our living again in another world. Dr.* Horne *miſtaken in his proof from ſcripture relating to it. The popular language there concerning it, how to be underſtood.* Luther's *ſentiment of the ſleep of the ſoul, little different: The doctrine revived by biſhop* Law; *defended by Archdeacon* Blackburne; *agreeable to true philoſophy, and the ſcriptures. How eaſy to retaliate Dr.* Horne's *treatment of Dr.* Prieſtley. p. 271

SECTION XIV.

Of Dr. Horne's *wrong interpretation of ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture.* p. 288

SECTION XV.

Of Dr. Horne's commentary on the pſalms. *Difficulty of the prophetic writings. A caution concerning them. Dr.* Horne's *wrong method of interpretation. Various inſtances of it. Remarks on them.* p. 312

SECTION

SECTION XVI.

The reply of the Students to Dr. Horne *for his letter to Dr.* Prieſtley, *in their names.* p. 329

A POSTSCRIPT.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *hiſtory of early opinions concerning* Jeſus Chriſt. p. 335

ERRATA.

p. 49. l. 9. *for* hands *read* hand
p. 91. l. 15. *dele* ſhould be
p. 97. l. 19. *for* leads *r.* lead
p. 106. note l. 4. from bottom *for* Chriſt ; *r.* Chriſt,
p. 107. note l. 4. *for* young perſons *r.* youth
p. 168. l. 11. *for* writing *r.* writings
p. 170 note *for* sheſe *r.* theſe
p. 206. l. 8. *for* he ſays *r.* I ſay
p. 221. l. 7. *for* there *r.* theſe
p. 231. l. 5. *for* he means *r.* the means
p. 233. note l. 4, *for* there mentioned *r.* Rom. viii. 34.
p. 315. l. 16. *for* inculcates *r.* inculcate

TO THE

YOUNGER STUDENTS

OF THE

TWO UNIVERSITIES.

SECTION I.

Deſign of the work. Dr. Prieſtley's *laudable motives in addreſſing the youth of the univerſities. The real author of the letter to him under the name of an undergraduate.*

THERE cannot be a more commendable employment than to endeavour, in any degree, to form or excite the minds of youth to piety and virtue, and to aſſiſt them in their enquiries after truth; thoſe among them eſpecially, who, like you, are deſtined

to act important parts upon the theatre of the world, and who muſt, by your ſituations, do much good or much harm in it.

This I profeſs to be my aim and ambition in theſe thoughts which I have publickly addreſſed to you, reſpecting the matters in diſcuſſion between Dr. Horne and Dr. Prieſtley, in which you bear a conſiderable part; and in my farther notification of certain things, in ſome others of Dr. Horne's writings, which may miſlead you moſt eſſentially, and which you may be otherwiſe apt to take upon truſt without examination, from a deference to his authority, and known worthy character.

And from an earneſt deſire in particular to aſſiſt you in underſtanding the revelation, which we believe the Divine Being to have given of himſelf, and of his will, and moral government over the human race, to which we belong; I have been farther prompted to lay before you ſome ſamples of the only juſt method of interpreting the ſacred volume, which contains that revelation, with a large exemplification of the contrary method; and have cloſed the whole with a catalogue of the

the *falſe readings* of Scripture, which have been introduced at different times, and continued, through an undue prejudice in favour of the doctrine of the trinity and the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt; accompanied with a liſt of the *miſtranſlations* of our engliſh bible, which have ariſen from the ſame cauſe, and ſtill remain.

Wo unto you when all men ſhall ſpeak well of you, ſays our Saviour Chriſt, Luke vi. 26. to his apoſtles, who were to carry on the inſtruction and reformation of the world, after he had left it; to warn them, that a general applauſe, in their department, was not to be obtained without mean compliances, and ſoothing men in their idolatry and ſinful practices.

This *wo* aſſuredly belongs not to Dr. Prieſtley, whatever be his merits or demerits in other reſpects. His frankneſs in publiſhing the progreſs of his inquiries into the ſcriptures, and early chriſtian antiquity, and the doctrines and opinions he has drawn from thoſe ſources, oftentimes contrary to what had been eſtabliſhed and held ſacred

for ages, has excited the zeal and diſpleaſure of thoſe againſt him, who from various and different motives would have every thing relating to religion remain quiet and untouched; and of others, who unhappily ſuppoſe the ſalvation of mankind to depend upon holding certain articles of belief, which he maintains to be void of all foundation: ſo that many ſet no bounds to their evil ſpeaking, and ignorant cenſures of him.

Such however has been the lot in all ages, among their cotemporaries, of the trueſt friends and benefactors of mankind, who have ſet themſelves to oppoſe and correct popular errors, eſpecially in the things of religion. Socrates, one of the moſt virtuous of men, and a preacher of truth in his day, according to the lights given him, was accuſed of poiſoning the minds of youth. If the diſpaſſionate wiſe and good approve, the accuſations of others may be more eaſily borne. Whether any juſt cauſe of complaint or offence, has been now given, you will judge from what I ſhall offer.

Dr. now

Dr. now Bp. Horſeley, Mr. White, Mr. Howes, Dr. Horne, dean of Canterbury, and preſident of Magdalen college, Oxford, have lately appeared in print againſt our author, chiefly with an intention to confute what he has advanced concerning the divine unity, and the perſon of Chriſt. The ſtate of the argument betwixt himſelf and Dr. Horſeley, Dr. Prieſtley has mentioned in page 10, &c. of his letters to Dr. Horne; and has made ſome animadverſions on Mr. White, in his "Im-"portance and extent of free inquiry in "matters of religion;" and in his *Defences of Unitarianiſm for the year* 1787, p. 71 to 108, hath made a full reply to the charges, which Mr. Howes hath brought againſt him.

The preſident of Magdalen maintains, that there are three divine perſons, who are each of them Gods, and equally to be worſhiped; and yet that theſe three perſons, thus diſtinctly to be invoked, are not three Gods, but one God: a doctrine, and a worſhip this, as appears from the face of the ſcriptures, and will more appear the

more accurately they are examined, wholly unknown to Moſes, and to Jeſus, and his apoſtles: and, to the philoſophic inquirer, nature's *(a)* light certainly teaches its great author and creator, GOD, to be one perſon only, one conſcious mind, one ſingle intelligent agent, wiſe and good.

After having ſhewn the inconcluſiveneſs of Dr. Horne's arguments in defence of this Trinity in Unity, as he ſtiles it from the creed aſcribed to Athanaſius, it was natural for

(a) "The plain argument for the exiſtence of the "Deity, obvious to all, and carrying irreſiſtible conviction "with it, is from the evident contrivance and fitneſs of "things for one another, which we meet with through-"out all parts of the univerſe. There is no need of nice "and ſubtle reaſonings in this matter: a manifeſt contri-"vance immediately ſuggeſts a contriver. It ſtrikes us "like a ſenſation; and artful reaſonings againſt it may "puzzle us, but it is without ſhaking our belief. No "perſon, for example, that knows the principles of op-"tics, and the ſtructure of the eye, can believe that it was "formed without ſkill in that ſcience; or that the ear was "formed without the knowlege of ſounds; or that the male "and female in animals were not formed for each other, and "for continuing the ſpecies. All our accounts of nature "are full of inſtances of this kind. The admirable and "beautiful ſtructure of things for final cauſes, exalts our "idea of the *Contriver*: the unity of deſign ſhews him to "be *One*."—*Maclaurin*'s account of Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s philoſophical diſcoveries, p. 400, 8vo.

for Dr. Prieſtley to turn his eyes to you, O ye noble, and ingenuous youth, the nation's hope, and future ornament and ſupport, I truſt! concerned and grieved at the thought, that you ſhould be conſtrained at any time, particularly at ſo early a period as ſome of you have done, to ſubſcribe and declare your belief of a doctrine ſo irreconcileable to reaſon and to ſcripture, together with that of original or birth-ſin, &c. &c. *(b)* connected with it.

From a foreſight of the difficulties, in which thoſe of you in particular, who are deſigned for ſacred orders, will probably be involved, if ever you ſhould ſearch the ſcriptures in earneſt for yourſelves, and find the daily ſervice of the church, in which you are bound to miniſter, and the articles of faith, to which your teachings are to be conformable, inconſiſtent with the convictions of your conſciences; he preſſes and

(b) A late excellent prelate, who earneſtly wiſhed for a farther reformation, and was not wanting in endeavours to promote it, was wont ſometimes in familiar converſation with friends, humourouſly to call original or birth-ſin, *the ſin of being born.*

ſolicits you, by the moſt cogent and affectionate arguments (*d*), to conſider this in time, and to take the meaſures, which might be effectual to remedy and redreſs ſo heavy a grievance.

Nor are thoſe among you, who are intended merely to diſcharge the duties and offices of civil life, unconcerned in this matter as they may imagine, ſo as to be under no obligation to take a part in it.

Next

(*c*) "Let titles of honour and dominion go as the providence of God will have, yet quiet and peaceable men will not fail of their obedience: no more will I of aught, ſo be that *God* and *good conſcience* command not the contrary. A higher degree of duty I do not ſee any man can demand at my hands: for whereas the exception of *good conſcience* founds not well with many men, becauſe ofttimes under that form, *pertinacy* and *wilfulneſs* is ſuſpected to couch itſelf; in this caſe, it concerns every man ſincerely to know the truth of his own heart, and ſo accordingly to determine of his own way, *whatſoever* the judgment of his *ſuperiors* be, or *whatſoever event* befall him. For ſince, in caſe of conſcience, many times there is a neceſſity to fall either into *the hands of men*, or into *the hands of God*; of theſe two, whether is the beſt, I leave every particular man to judge: only I will add thus much, it is a *fearful thing* to trifle with *conſcience*; for moſt aſſuredly, according unto *it*, a man ſhall ſtand or fall at the laſt."—Letter of Mr. *Hales* to Abp. *Laud*.

Next to officiating and adminiſtring in forms of worſhip contrary to the ſenſe of their own minds, and invoking thoſe whom they believe not to be gods, or capable of hearing and helping them; near of kin to this, and not much inferior ſurely is the fault of joining in worſhip directed to ſuch objects, and thereby giving ſanction and encouragement to it. Your firſt apprehenſions, I am perſuaded, would lead you to think that no good mind could be eaſy in ſuch a cuſtomary practice; although many ſuch there have been, and are, who can bring themſelves to be ſatisfied with it, through the force of habit, and from various reaſons, and particularly by ſuppoſing, that as the wrong part of the worſhip is not their act, they may ſafely join in the parts they approve, and have nothing to do with the others. But whether this be a conduct ſtrictly upright, and what a chriſtian ought to acquieſce in, as agreeable with his divine maſter's teachings, deſerves your matureſt conſideration.

It is not therefore impertinently, or without juſt cauſe, that Dr. Prieſtley has taken upon

upon him the office of a monitor, and, if I may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, of a tutor to you, on the preſent occaſion.

He hereby does no more than diſcharge the duty which one man owes to another, and I promiſe myſelf that I ſhall have you agreeing in ſentiment with me. But whether *another perſon*, who has condemned him ſo highly in this matter, has acted a candid and wiſe part towards him and you, we are next to examine.

Of the Undergraduate's letter to Dr. Prieſtley.

It was no unpleaſing circumſtance to obſerve in this letter, that Dr. Prieſtley's addreſs to you had gained ſome degree of attention, and was likely to gain more. Such a curious device, ſo ſpeedily put in execution, without any argument, and merely in the way of drollery, to deter you from looking into his writings, betrayed great apprehenſions leſt you might be inclined to peruſe them; eſpecially when it was by no means clear from the firſt, that the letter originated with you. For though the writer ſometimes

times paſſes himſelf off tolerably well in that reſpect as one of you, his manner of defending the cauſe he eſpouſes, diſcovers the ſtrong bias and prepoſſeſſions of an older head too much, to make the deception natural.

It ſoon began therefore to be whiſpered about, that under the humble name of undergraduate lay concealed a perſon of eminence in the univerſity, and the rumour ſoon grew into a very general perſuaſion, which no one that I can find calls in queſtion, that it was the compoſition of no leſs a perſon than the learned preſident of Magdalen college, and dean of Canterbury; who, by a very venial artifice and anachroniſm, choſe to make himſelf paſs for one of you, as he formerly had been ſuch, the better to anſwer his purpoſe. And though the tendency of his work be to ſhut you up in darkneſs, and ignorance of a ſubject of all others the moſt important, all your lives; yet I conceive him to have written from a pure deſign of ſerving you, and of promoting what he apprehends to be right. For his general character and practice beſpeak him

him a good man, and it appears very particularly from his other publications, that he is not only a ſincere believer in, but a worſhiper of Jeſus Chriſt as God Almighty, and this in an extraordinary manner, beyond many: and therefore, not to mention other ſubjects of wide difference, he muſt be greatly hurt with, and to the utmoſt of his power endeavour to turn you away from writings, whoſe aim is to prove from ſcripture, and the teſtimony of Chriſt himſelf and his apoſtles, and the general perſuaſion of chriſtians in the earlieſt ages, that our Lord was only a moſt virtuous and excellent creature, the meſſenger and prophet of the moſt high and only true God, a mortal man of the nation of the jews, and family of Abraham and David.

The doctrine embraced, and pleaded for, by Dr. Horne, being not taught in the bible, as has been often ſhewn, and will be ſeen hereafter in this work; yet being drawn in almoſt with your firſt breath (of which I may ſpeak from ſome experience) from nurſes, parents, creeds, catechiſms; inculcated daily in prayers, public and private;

vate; bound upon you afterwards by a ſubſcription to articles of faith, framed by ignorant and fallible men, by whoſe deciſions nevertheleſs you are to abide and to interpret the ſcripture itſelf by them, ſo that all avenues of free inquiry into its meaning are ſhut up: under ſuch early impreſſions and influence, it muſt have been with great pains and difficulty that any have emancipated themſelves, and come at the truth in this point.

That theſe fetters which are now in youth comparatively light upon your minds, may be taken off; and particularly, that you may be enabled to form ſome judgment purely your own, when you bend your knees in prayer, whether you are to addreſs yourſelves to *three eternal, almighty perſons*, or to *one* ſuch *perſon* only; Dr. Prieſtley directed his firſt letters to you, at the cloſe of thoſe inſcribed to the dean of Canterbury, compoſed in a ſtrain of good ſenſe, piety and benevolence, juſtly admired; and now again, at the inſtant I am writing, he has ſhewn the weakneſs of the arguments, which the ſame worthy perſon under his feigned name of *Undergraduate*,

Undergraduate, had advanced, in reply to him, and in plea for your remaining under theſe chains of ſubſcription for ever. It will be my taſk to acquaint you with the defective accounts, and miſrepreſentation of many things, which this your pretended brother-undergraduate's prejudices have led him into, ſuch as I do not find noticed by Dr. Prieſtley.

SECTION II.

Subſcription to the creeds and articles of the church, a grievance long complained of. Archbp. Tillotſon's *wiſh concerning* Athanaſius's *creed. Curious hiſtory of a contrary temper in the preſent day. Of Mr.* Locke's *ſentiments. Of Dr.* Clarke's. *Of* Mr. Whiſton's. *The candid diſquiſitions. The clerical petitioners at the* Feathers. *Clerical aſſembly at* Tenniſon's *library. Of Dr.* Durell's *ſentiments. Of Bp.* Lowth's.

NOTHING is more difficult than to aſſume a character that belongs not to us, and

and act conſiſtently in it. In Dr. Horne's letter drawn up for you, we find many things at your time of life, never likely to have entered into your thoughts; particularly, the myſtic notion, p. 40, that the epiſtle to the Hebrews is a divine expoſition of the Old Teſtament. We alſo perceive not in the author, that curioſity, and ardent thirſt after and love of truth, which belong to the human mind in the early prime of life: but, what is moſt unnatural to that age, a fixed reſolution to make no inquiry into ſubjects of the higheſt moment, but to ſit down lazy and ſatisfied with what others, without any juſt pretenſions, have decided concerning them, before he was born.

By writing however in the character of a young diſputant, he has a plauſible excuſe for paſſing over a circumſtance, with which you ought by no means to be unacquainted; which is, that however he pleads for ſubſcription to creeds and articles, and will not admit the idea of any alteration or relaxation, a reformation therein has from the firſt, more particularly of late, been deſired and

and ſought for by ſome of the wiſeſt and beſt men of the nation.

To touch only upon ſome things that have fallen out within a century paſt.

Archbiſhop Tillotſon writes from Lambeth to Bp. Burnet, in 1694, upon reading his expoſition of the 39 articles:

"In the article of the Trinity, you have "ſaid all that I think can be ſaid, upon *ſo* "*obſcure and difficult an argument.* The "Socinians have juſt now publiſhed an "anſwer to us all; but I have not had a "ſight of it.—*The account given of Athana-* "*ſius's creed ſeems to me no-wiſe ſatisfactory.* "*I wiſh we were well rid of it.*" Life of Tillotſon by Birch, 8vo. p. 342. 343.

It is a great misfortune not to do right things, and give up what is wrong and indefenſible, at the time, as ſoon as perceived, eſpecially in religious matters; becauſe doctrines the moſt groundleſs and irrational, when ſtamped by authority, ſoon grow to be received without examination as the moſt ſacred truths; and reformation, from

from various cauſes, becomes the more difficult, the longer it is delayed.

Thus the ſuſpected text, 1 John v. 7. which was marked out as ſuch in our engliſh bibles, at the time of the reformation, and whoſe ſpurioufneſs has been more and more evinced ſince that period to the preſent day, by the critical inquiries of learned men, is, nevertheleſs, in the face of all the demonſtration of its not having been of the writing of the apoſtle that the ſubject is capable of, now aſſerted to be genuine, with a temper and ſpirit and by a method of argument, which certainly does no credit to the writer, or the cauſe he would maintain. For this I would refer all that are judges, to Mr. Travis's own work, or to a Gleaning of remarks upon it, at the end of vol. 1, of "Commentaries and Eſſays, publiſhed by "the Society for promoting the know-"ledge of the Scriptures, 1786."

And yet, on this gentleman's hardy aſſertions, devoid of all proof, biſhop Seabury has lately proclaimed this exploded text to be authentic, throughout America, as far as his

feeble voice and little authority can go, in a charge delivered by him at Derby in the State of Connecticut, September 1786. "I am not ignorant, ſays he, p. 10. that "the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. is diſ-"puted. Nor am I ignorant that it has "been *inconteſtably* eſtabliſhed by the Rev. "Mr. Travis, in his letters to Mr. Gibbon." Dr. Croft alſo, p. 80. and Mr. Hawkins, p. 188. the two laſt Bampton-Lecturers, have ſent their readers to Mr. Travis, as "hav-"ing evinced the genuineneſs of the text to "the intire ſatisfaction of every candid "and impartial inquirer." Ye will judge for yourſelves, ye virtuous youth and ſearchers after truth, whether theſe gentlemen have not been too ſoon and eaſily ſatisfied.

Thus alſo the following hiſtory of recent facts will ſhew, in what different eſtimation this creed of Athanaſius is held by ſome in high places in the church, than it was in Tillotſon's days, by him, and others: and this,

this, even after it has been ſtill more clearly demonſtrated not to have been compoſed by Athanaſius, but drawn up long after his time, and put out under his name, moſt probably by one Vigilius Tapſenſis; the ſame who firſt cited the ſpurious text of 1 John v. 7, as genuine; one who accuſtomed himſelf to put the names of learned men of former times to his works, and paſs them off as their's; a practice, whatever his motive was for it, moſt highly to be condemned, tending to throw confuſion into hiſtory, and to prevent our coming at certainty about any perſons or things in former ages.

Soon after the ſeparation of the American States from the mother-country, in the year 1785, a liturgy was publiſhed at Boſton in New England, for the uſe of the firſt epiſcopal church in that city, in which the plan of Dr. Clarke's reformed liturgy was adopted, and the worſhip made ſtrictly unitarian, being addreſſed throughout to the One Almighty Father of all through Jeſus Chriſt. In this, however,

only one congregation was immediately concerned.

But in conſequence of a general meeting for the purpoſe, in the ſame year, there came out, *The book of Common Prayer and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies,* as reviſed and propoſed to the uſe *of the proteſtant epiſcopal church, at a convention of the ſaid church in the ſtates of* NEW-YORK, NEW-JERSEY, PENSILVANIA, DELAWARE, MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, and SOUTH-CAROLINA, held in Philadelphia, from September 27th to October 7th, 1785. Philadelphia, printed 1786.

Conſidering the attachment of many to old forms, and the ſtrenuous efforts now uſed to preſerve a ſteady adherence to them, there was a commendable amendment of them made at this time; though it fell ſhort of the wiſhes and endeavours of not a few among them, eſpecially with reſpect to the article of worſhip. For I am well informed, that there was a motion made in the convention, for an alteration in the litany.

litany, and particularly for retaining only the firſt invocation, and removing the three others, namely, thoſe to *God the Son, God the Holy Ghoſt,* and *the holy and bleſſed Trinity.*

In their preface, they have commendably inſerted the different articles propoſed for a review by King William's eccleſiaſtical commiſſioners in 1689, among whom were thoſe excellent men, Tillotſon, Burnet, Patrick, Tenniſon, &c.

Two of the articles therein mentioned, to be reviewed, by thoſe eminent men, were,

" *Whether the* ATHANASIAN CREED *may*
" *not, conſiſtently with piety, faith and cha-*
" *rity, be either wholly omitted, or left indif-*
" *ferent in itſelf?*"

" Whether the articles of religion may
" not deſerve a review; and the ſubſcrip-
" tion to them and the common prayer, be
" contrived, after ſome manner, leſs except-
" tionable than at preſent?"

But this american aſſembly did not ſtop here, and content themſelves with mere

words and declarations. The 39 articles they reduced to 20.

They excluded not only the creed of Athanaſius ſo called, but the Nicene creed alſo.

In the apoſtles' creed, they omit the clauſe of Chriſt's *deſcent into hell*; for which they aſſign the following reaſon: "This clauſe, "as Bp. *Burnet*, Bp. *Pearſon*, and other "writers inform us, is found in no creed, "nor mentioned by any writer, until about "the 5th century; and in the firſt creeds "that have this clauſe or article, that of "Chriſt's *burial* not being mentioned in "them, it follows that they underſtood "the deſcent into *hell* only of his burial or "deſcent into the grave, as the word is "otherwiſe tranſlated in the bible. The "Nicene creed hath only the burial, and "the Athanaſian only the deſcent into "hell."

You will judge, whether the hiſtory of what follows, with reſpect to this american epiſcopal liturgy, tells to the credit of thoſe who were concerned in ſome counter-reformations,

mations, may I not ſtile them, that were attempted, and ſome that were actually made in it.

In the firſt convention of the proteſtant epiſcopal church, held in Philadelphia, from Sept. 27 to Oct. 7, 1785, it was reſolved to "addreſs the archbiſhops and biſhops of "the church of England, requeſting them "to confer the epiſcopal character, on "ſuch perſons as ſhall be choſen and re-"commended to them for that purpoſe, "from the conventions of their church, "in their reſpective ſtates."

In their ſecond convention, held alſo at the city of Philadelphia in June, 1786, a letter was read from the Archbiſhops and Biſhops of the church of England, notifying their approbation of the addreſs made to them, and deſire of complying with the prayer of their addreſs, but expreſſing ſome heſitation on account of a report of alterations adopted, or intended in the american liturgy; "leſt they ſhould be the inſtru-"ments of eſtabliſhing an eccleſiaſtical "ſyſtem, which will be called a branch of "the church of England, but afterwards

" may poſſibly appear to have departed " from it eſſentially, either in doctrine or in " diſcipline."

In their next convention, held at Wilmington in Delaware, Oct. 1786, there was read a letter from the archbiſhops of Canterbury and York, in which, after having mentioned their having received their American Common-prayer-book, &c. they expreſs themſelves in theſe words; " The " whole of your communications was then, " with as little delay as poſſible, taken into " conſideration, at a meeting of the arch- " biſhops and fifteen of the biſhops, being " all who were then in London, and able " to attend; and it was impoſſible not to " obſerve with concern, that, if the eſſen- " tial doctrines of our common faith were " retained, leſs reſpect however was paid " to our liturgy than its own excellence, " and your declared attachment to it, had " led us to expect; not to mention a " variety of verbal alterations, of the ne- " ceſſity or propriety of which we are by " no means ſatisfied; we ſaw with grief, " that two of the confeſſions of our chriſ-

" tian

" tian faith, reſpectable for their antiquity, " have been intirely laid aſide; and that " even in that which is called the apoſ- " tles' creed, an article is omitted, which " was thought neceſſary to be inſerted, " with a view to a particular hereſy, in a " very early age of the church, and has " ever ſince had the venerable ſanction of " univerſal reception."

A little after, in the courſe of their letter, reſuming the ſubject, they ſay;

" We therefore moſt earneſtly exhort " you, that you reſtore to its integrity the " apoſtles' creed, in which you have omit- " ted an article merely, as it ſeems, from " miſrepreſentation of the ſenſe in which " it is underſtood by our church; nor can " we help adding, that we hope you will " think it but a decent proof of the at- " tachment which you profeſs to the ſer- " vices of our liturgy, to give to the other " two creeds a place in your book of com- " mon prayer, even though the uſe of them " ſhould be left diſcretional."

The above accounts are taken from the journals of the different conventions, printed at

at Philadelphia. In what follows, concerning this laſt convention at Wilmington, we are informed, that it was unanimouſly agreed to comply with the deſire of the engliſh biſhops, by re-admitting the Nicene creed into their american liturgy, but that it ſhould be at the option of the miniſter, to read that or the apoſtles' creed. The reſtoration however of the creed of Athanaſius, ſo called, to its place, was unanimouſly negatived by three of the ſtates, and by a majority of the other two. But Chriſt's *deſcent into hell* was again adopted and received into the apoſtles' creed, though not without ſome negative voices; and the others might perhaps ſatisfy themſelves with having declared publicly the ſenſe they gave it, as equivalent to his being put into the grave, or buried.

O ye *Tillotſons, Patricks, Burnets, Tenniſons*, could ye have been now recalled from your long quiet *(d)* repoſe in the grave, where

(d) I never read but with great diſlike, the hackneyed inſcription on hatchments, which preſents itſelf ſo often to our eyes in the ſtreets of this metropolis; *In cœlo quies, in heaven reſt*; whereas in truth it ſhould be reverſed, *ſub terra*

where Chriſt your maſter was ſuffered to remain only three days, how different a part would ye have acted! To how much wider

terra quies, in cœlo vita, in the grave reſt, in heaven life; for ſurely no dull repoſe is to be expected there. And though ſuch ſort of things, I apprehend, are commonly left to undertakers, who follow a beaten road, without much diſtinction, I muſt confeſs I was particularly pleaſed to ſee over Savile-houſe, after its maſter, the late Sir George Savile, had quitted it and all earthly things, a hatchment with that fine bold chriſtian motto, *Reſurgam, I ſhall riſe again*, which none but the chriſtian can *ſay with confidence*. And it truly belonged to him, as a chriſtian; for ſuch he was, taking a latitude in many things to think for himſelf, as I believe all do that think at all on the ſubject. I remember hearing him once expreſs himſelf with diſapprobation (that gentleman will pardon me) of Mr. Gibbon's unfair way of attacking chriſtianity in the guiſe of a pretended friend, inſtead of coming forth openly againſt what he eſteemed to be wrong. He was withal the moſt benevolent of men, leaving himſelf at laſt ſcarce a competency out of his vaſt fortunes, through his unbounded zeal to ſerve his friends, his relations, his country, and mankind. Of an integrity the moſt uncorrupted, but ſo well known, that it is almoſt an injury to him to name it; and, which crowns the rational virtuous character, worſhiping with profoundeſt reverence the one only living and true God, and parent of the univerſe. Some little teſtimony I could bear in theſe reſpects, from the year

wider a compaſs would ye have pleaded for your *eccleſiaſtical commiſſion* to be extended, had ye enjoyed thoſe lights concerning the equal rights of men, and the incompetency of human authority in the things of religion, with which the world hath been bleſt ſince your time, by the labours of Locke, Hoadley, Blackburne, Law, all theſe now, and ſome very lately,* gathered to the ſame ſilent manſions with yourſelves, waiting the reſurrection-day!

It may be uſeful to ſubjoin a remark on the above american buſineſs, together with a ſhort account of another tranſaction in that country in ſome connection with it; as the whole will contribute to give you clear ideas on an eccleſiaſtical ſubject, commonly involved in much darkneſs.

To a mind in any due degree enlightened by a proper uſe of its reaſoning powers, and by the ſtudy of the ſcriptures themſelves, it muſt appear the reſult of a ſtrange ſuperſtition, for men, like theſe new american biſhops,

* year 1774 to his lamented death, and am happy in paying this tribute of honour and grateful eſteem to his memory.

biſhops, to be ſent acroſs the Atlantic, to receive a power and authority of appointing or ordaining teachers of the goſpel, which otherwiſe they could not have exerciſed with benefit or effect; and this to be conveyed to them, through the laying on of the hands of chriſtian miniſters in England, of a particular name and deſcription, ſuppoſed to derive their peculiar privilege and power, in a regular, uninterrupted deſcent and ſucceſſion from the apoſtles.

And it is a matter of wonder to many, that ſeveral large provinces of that new world, after having contended ſo intrepidly for their civil independency, ſhould ſubject themſelves to the having chains put upon their minds and conſciences, the heavieſt of all others, and binding them upon their poſterity, by conſenting particularly to the great alteration *(e)* made in their fourth article of religion, in order to engage the engliſh biſhops to conſecrate the perſons ſent over

(e) In their new common-prayer book, printed at Philadelphia, 1787, the ivth article was as follows.

" Of the creed.

" The creed, commonly called the *apoſtles'* creed, ought to

over to them, and alſo by their tacit implied purpoſe of not deviating any farther from the doctrine and worſhip of the church of England, acknowleged on all hands, by very many of its own members, to ſtand in great need of a reformation in both theſe reſpects.

As to apoſtolic ſucceſſion, or any virtue or powers derived from it, which the church of Rome and church of England claim, it is

to be received and believed: becauſe it may be proved by the holy ſcripture."

It was ordered to be altered as follows, in compliance with the requiſition of the engliſh biſhops.

" Of the creeds.

" The two creeds, namely, that commonly called the " *apoſtles'* creed, and the Nicene creed, ought to be received " and believed, becauſe they may be proved by the holy " ſcripture."

So that inſtead of a creed, which declared one perſon, God, the Father almighty, to be God; they have contrary to their own purpoſe, admitted and approved a creed, which declares *three* perſons, each of them to be *very God*, and all the three equally to be worſhiped and glorified. It is to be hoped, that the americans will not look upon the law that conſtrains them to this to be like the law of the Medes and Perſians, never to be altered.

is a mere phantom, ſignifying nothing; which, if it could be proved to be regular and unbroken, would give no powers above what any other miniſters of the goſpel poſſeſs, without any ſuch pretences. And with reſpect to baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, the latter of which has been ſo aſtoniſhingly perverted from the ſimplicity of its original inſtitution, there is no ground from the ſcripture, or from early antiquity, *(f)* to appropriate the miniſtration of theſe ordinances to the teachers of the goſpel, ſave what aroſe from propriety and decorum, and on that account very rightly to be attended to: but that otherwiſe, laymen, thoſe that were not teachers of religion, might officiate by themſelves in theſe ordinances with equal good effect.

I doubt not therefore but that the members of the firſt epiſcopal church of Boſton in

(f) See this ſubject diſcuſſed with great learning and accuracy, in "Bohmeri diſſertationes juris eccleſiaſtici, particularly de coitionibus chriſtianorum ad capiendum cibum, de jure laicorum ſacerdotali, et de jure dandi baptiſmum."

in New England will be applauded and approved by all equal judges, as having exerted a proper chriſtian ſpirit, and exerciſed only thoſe powers which by apoſtolic practice and authority belong to every chriſtian ſociety, in ordaining Mr. Freeman, a perſon moſt deſervedly choſen by them, to be their miniſter: and eſpecially after they and their miniſter had ſhewn all proper deference and condeſcenſion to received order and cuſtom, in applications to the new american biſhops for Mr. Freeman to have received ordination from them, but which was not to be obtained without ſuch ſubmiſſions and declarations as the goſpel of Chriſt condemns. And though, in their form of ordination, they have expreſſed, that they ſhall not object to Mr. Freeman's having alſo an epiſcopal ordination, it is to be hoped, that all the members of the congregation will ſo far overcome former prejudices, as to ſhew themſelves ſuperior to ſuch weakneſs, in imagining, that the hand of a biſhop can convey any thing to their miniſter, of which he is not already poſſeſſed.

The

The (*g*) form of the ordination I have given you in the margin. The plan of it was

(*g*) The exact manner in which the whole tranſaction paſſed was as follows:

November 18, 1787, after evening-prayer, the Church-wardens came into the reading-deſk and having placed Mr. Freeman between them, the ſenior warden acquainted the congregation with the deſign of the meeting. A ſhort prayer introduced the ſervice, and then the following vote of ordination was read, voted and ſigned,

Boſton, 18th Nov. 1787.

"Voted, that We, the Wardens, Veſtry, Proprietors, and Congregation of the Chapel, or Firſt Epiſcopal Church in Boſton, do, by virtue of the third article of the Declaration of Rights, hereby ſolemnly Elect, Ordain, Conſtitute and Appoint, the Rev. James Freeman of ſaid Boſton, Clerk, to be our Rector, Miniſter, Prieſt, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, and Public Teacher, to preach the word of God, and to diſpenſe leſſons and inſtructions in Piety, Religion and Morality, and to miniſter the holy Sacraments to the Congregation, and ſo to do, perform and diſcharge all the other duties and offices, which of right belong to any other Rector, Miniſter, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, Public Teacher, or Prieſt in Orders.

And it is hereby intended and underſtood, that the Authority and Rights hereby given to the Rev. James Freeman, to be our Rector, Miniſter, Prieſt, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, and Public Teacher, are to remain in full force ſo long as he ſhall continue to preach the word of

was ſuggeſted, I am told, by Governor Bowdoin, a member of the congregation of the epiſcopal

God, and diſpenſe inſtructions of Piety, Religion, and Morality conformable to our opinions and ſentiments of the Holy Scriptures, and no longer, and that our judgment of his not conforming to our religious ſentiments and opinions, ſhall be aſcertained by the votes of three-fourths of the Wardens and Veſtry, and of three-fourths of the Proprietors uſually worſhipping in ſaid Church ſeparately and individually taken.

Signed,

Thomas Bulfinch, } Wardens.
Shrimpton Hutchinſon, }

In behalf of ourſelves, and the veſtry, and a majority of the proprietors and congregation of the chapel, or firſt epiſcopal church in Boſton.

After the vote of ordination the following was paſſed:

" And it is further voted that if at any time hereafter, Ordination by the impoſition of hands from a biſhop in common and uſual form can be procured for Mr. Freeman, without ſacrificing our own religious ſentiments to thoſe of others, we will adopt that method, in confirmation of the preſent mode of ordination. Mr. F. then ſignified his acceptance of the election and ordination, and that he believed it to be apoſtolic and valid. After which the ſenior warden declared him duly ordained and " whilſt in a ' moſt intereſting manner, he exhorted him to do his

' duty

epiſcopal chapel, a gentleman of learning, and great merit. And I am alſo informed, that many diſtinguiſhed characters in that part of the world, to whom the plan was communicated, before it was put in practice, expreſſed their intire approbation of it. They conſidered it as a revival of the ſentiments which prevailed in the churches of that country, at its firſt ſettlement. In the New England platform of church diſcipline, publiſhed by a ſynod, in the year 1684, it is ſaid; "Ordination, we account nothing "elſe, but the ſolemn putting of a man into "his place and office in the church, where-"unto he had right before by election; "being like the inſtalling of a magiſtrate "in the common wealth. In ſuch churches "where there are no elders, impoſition of "hands may be performed by ſome of "the brethren orderly choſen thereunto. "For if the people may elect officers which "is the greater, and wherein the ſubſtance

' duty with fidelity, he laid one hand upon him, and with ' the other delivered him the bible, injoining him to make ' that ſacred book the rule of his faith and conduct. Then ' followed prayer and a bleſſing.'

" of the office doth conſiſt, they may much " more (occaſion and need ſo requiring) " impoſe hands in ordination, which is leſs, " and but the accompliſhment of the " other."

Every lover of learning, piety, and truth, will riſe at the name of *Locke*, the honour of our country, and of your univerſity in particular, ye ſons of *Iſis!* however unjuſtly expelled from his place among you, in trying times, by arbitrary power.

In your ſtudious, ſhady walks, and groves, oft viſited and made ſacred by him, he meditated and planned his firſt immortal work; in which, with thought profound, he explored and delineated, the principles, and elements of human knowlege, and how beſt to conduct the mind in the ſearch and attainment of truth.

Nor did he more excell in thus inveſtigating, and teaching the uſe of our natural reaſoning powers, than in deſcrying, and pointing out the proper application of them, to the right

right underſtanding of the written records of divine revelation, of which he was a firm believer. Of his admirable ſkill herein, his preface to ſome of St. Paul's epiſtles, and commentaries and notes upon them, are a noble monument.

In religious opinion he was ſtrictly unitarian; holding the ſupreme, omnipotent Father to be God alone, and no other perſon beſides him.

What he thought at large, concerning the impoſition of creeds, and articles of faith, by human authority, is ſeen in his "Letters on toleration;" and you may gather it particularly, from his "Reaſonable-"neſs of chriſtianity, as contained in the "ſcriptures." In which admirable tract, he advances and proves this point, *viz. that Chriſt and his apoſtles, did not propound any article as neceſſarily to be believed to make a man a chriſtian, but this*; *that* JESUS IS THE CHRIST, *or the Meſſias.* No one therefore hath any right or title to impoſe the belief of any other article as neceſſary to chriſtian communion, or man's final ſalvation, than Chriſt required.

In this treatiſe alſo, amidſt other things, Mr. Locke aſſerts and demonſtrates, that the phraſe, *Son of God*, in the New Teſtament, applied to our Saviour, ſignifies nothing more than *the Chriſt*, or the Meſſiah.

And this I would obſerve by the way, may teach you, what judgment to form of thoſe very learned perſons, who will have Chriſt to be the Son of God, as Dr. Clarke ſays, (Serm. vol. v. p. 30, 8vo.) "on account of deriving his being from the "Father, in a ſingular and incomprehenſible manner, before the world was:" or, as Bp. Pearſon on the creed, (p. 142. 1683) and others maintain, that Chriſt was the Son of God, "by a communication of "the divine eſſence to him, which was a "proper generation; and that by this his "natural and eternal generation, Chriſt is "of the ſame ſubſtance, and conſequently "of the ſame power and dignity with "God." Common ſenſe rejects the idea of a Son of God, (that is, one, who, by the very terms, derives his being from him) becoming equal in power and dignity to

HIM,

HIM, from whom he received his being. And the holy ſcriptures acknowlege no ſuch *Son of God* as this, ſo derived; nor happily do they deal in ſuch dark unintelligible language, as *proper generations, eternal generations and communications of the divine eſſence*, as the way, ſtrange to ſpeak, in the which perſons are made Gods, equal to the ſupreme Father of all.

Great allowance ſhould be made for thoſe, who by taking up a wrong ſyſtem concerning Jeſus Chriſt, or through the illuſions of ſcience falſely ſo called, involve themſelves in a cloud of words without meaning. But do ye always keep ſight of ſcripture, and uſe no words but ſuch as you, and every plowman, and drayman, can equally underſtand! For moſt aſſuredly, Chriſt and his apoſtles, intended to be underſtood by ſuch, as well as by Cambridge and Oxford ſcholars.

How far ſoever the famous Rector of St. James's, the virtuous, learned, and able Dr. Clarke, miſled by ſome of the early chriſtian

writers, exalted the character of Jeſus Chriſt, beyond what the ſcriptures make him; yet he always contended for the divine unity as a point the moſt ſacred; that the Father was the only true God, and object of religious worſhip.

The amendments, which he earneſtly wiſhed to have taken place in the liturgy of the church of England, are exactly conformable to this idea. This appears from his *Reformed Common-prayer-book*, in which ſuch amendments are marked in his own hand-writing; which was given by his ſon, the late Mr. Clarke, to the Britiſh Muſeum, and is there preſerved. All the direct addreſſes to Chriſt and the holy ghoſt, are blotted out by him: and ſuch only reſerved and allowed, where God, the Father only, is invoked and adored.

What Mr. Emlyn has preſerved of his ſentiments on the preſent ſubject, with whom he appears to have lived in great intimacy the latter part of his life, is too much deſerving your attention not to be tranſcribed at large.

It

It was on the proſpect of Dr. Clarke being to be raiſed to the ſee of Canterbury, that Mr. Emlyn had an interview with him, of which he gives the following relation.

"Some time, ſays he, in November 1727, Dr. Clarke wrote to me in a familiar letter, *that he had a great mind to talk with me,* if I could come any morning, but *Saturday*. Accordingly within two or three days I went to him, and we talked more freely and cloſely of theſe matters. We ſoberly and fairly conſidered what difficulties and juſt objections might lie in his way, on the ſuppoſal of his being offered ſuch eccleſiaſtical dignity. For I muſt ſay, that he ever ſeemed to me, ſeriouſly concerned not to violate his conſcience for any preferment, nor to run raſhly into great ſnares; nor did I ever know any man more ready to hear, with all the eaſe and calmneſs poſſible, what might be in reaſon oppoſed. He never intended, by any means, to be taken off from profeſſing and defending what he believed to be the *great truths* of the goſpel.

'pel, and in particular ſaid, he intended 'to print a new edition of his *Scripture-* 'doctrine, &c. with ſome additions.

'The greateſt difficulty which occurred, 'as I remember, was the buſineſs of *ordi-* 'nation of prieſts, and deacons. Some things 'in the preſcribed form he did not ap- 'prove, and could not uſe; particularly, the 'hymn, *Come Holy Ghoſt, eternal God,* &c. 'but there being liberty to uſe another 'hymn, this did not preſs; ſome other 'matters I objected to, which did not ſtick 'with him. But the grand objection of all 'was, the requiring the perſons to be or- 'dained, to *ſubſcribe the articles,* according to 'canon 36. He ſaid, it would be evil for 'him to require them to do, what he 'would not judge fit to do himſelf, or to 'that effect; which I thought to be a juſt 'reflection. But I obſerved to him, that 'although if a ſuffragan biſhop ordained 'any without taking that ſubſcription, he 'might be ſuſpended from giving orders for 'one year, by his metropolitan, yet by 'that canon, no penalty was incurred by 'the metropolitan himſelf. However as

the

'the perſons ordained could not enjoy any 'benefice, without ſuch ſubſcription, and 'might legally claim it; I thought he 'ought plainly to tell them, that he no 'way encouraged them to ſubſcribe, nor 'did he approve of it, but yet if themſelves 'were ſatisfied in their own minds that 'they could ſafely do it, he ſhould not bar 'them of their liberty therein. To which 'the Doctor anſwered, *Nay, I would tell 'them further, that I had not accepted pre-'ferment myſelf for that very reaſon, and that 'if it were in my power, I would have it 'taken away.*"—Emlyn's works, vol. ii. p. 493.

From this narrative, it may deſerve to be remarked; that the firſt princes of the houſe of Hanover, George I. and George II. and his royal conſort, the patrons of this learned and worthy divine, ſhewed extraordinary favour towards him, although he was known to be an Arian, i. e. one who did not believe the doctrine of the Trinity.

And as theſe great perſonages had thoughts of advancing Dr. Clarke to the higheſt dignity in the church, it is probable that of themſelves,

themſelves, they would have had no objection to ſuch alterations in the liturgy, as he was earneſt and ſolicitous to introduce.

It is not to be expected, that princes ſhould turn reformers: but it is a great happineſs, when they do nothing to obſtruct or hinder the ſalutary work.

The moſt honeſt and truly learned Mr. Whiſton's teſtimony to the Divine Unity, and his ſufferings for it, ſhould be well known to you. For this I would refer you to his memoirs of his own life, written in his old age; a moſt edifying work, paſſing by ſome weakneſſes and indiſcretions very pardonable at ſuch a period, and in the midſt of ſuch ſhining excellencies. You have there an account, with what zeal and labour, having given up his preferments for the goſpel's ſake, and a penſioner on the bounties of others, this apoſtolic man ſpent the laſt forty years of his life, in travelling about from place to place, and bearing teſtimony againſt the impoſition of ſubſcription

tion to human articles of faith, as a ſnare to good minds only; and in endeavours to induce the governors of the church to render the liturgy a ſcriptural worſhip, i. e. unitarian; to correct the doxologies, to omit the creed called the *Athanaſian*, and ſeveral clauſes in that called the *Nicene*, to reform the firſt petitions in the liturgy, with the direction of the reſt to God, the ſupreme Father of all.

Somewhat leſs than forty years ago were publiſhed, "Free and candid diſquiſitions, "relating to the church of England, and "the means of advancing religion therein, "addreſſed to the governing powers in "church and ſtate, and more immediately "to the two houſes of convocation."

In this deſign were embarked ſome perſons of the laity of great learning, and worth, and ſome highly eſtimable clerical characters: but we have never yet been made acquainted with their names.

Never

Never could any more reaſonable or moderate propoſals have been made for a redreſs of things amiſs. The point of ſubſcription was particularly conſidered, and modeſt mention made of its being the opinion of ſome among them, *(h)* that one article, out of the thirty-nine, would be ſufficient to all the real and uſeful purpoſes of ſubſcription, *viz.* the ſixth. I remember at the time, that in one of our univerſities, there was a general diſpoſition in the younger part of it's members, to favour theſe diſquiſitions, and an expectation that ſome reformation would have taken place in conſequence of them.

About

(h) Free and candid diſquiſitions, p. 163. note. The ſixth article is, this:

Of the ſufficiency of the holy Scriptures for ſalvation.

"Holy ſcripture containeth all things neceſſary to ſal-
"vation; ſo that whatever is not read therein, nor may
"be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man,
"that it ſhould be believed as an article of the faith, or
"be thought requiſite or neceſſary to ſalvation. In the
"name of the holy ſcripture we do underſtand thoſe
"canonical books of the Old and New Teſtament, of
"whoſe authority was never any doubt in the church.

About 20 years afterwards, in 1771, a number of ſerious members of the church of England became perſuaded, that more active meaſures to obtain the deſired reformation were to be purſued, and joined in a ſcheme for petitioning the legiſlature for relief in the matter of ſubſcription to the 39 articles and liturgy of the church of England, and many reſpectable perſons in different parts of the kingdom united with them in their application to parliament, and ſet their names to the petition.

Their cauſe was ſo well argued and defended in the Commons' houſe of parliament, by ſome of its moſt illuſtrious members; and ſo many appeared for it, that though unſucceſsful by the majority of votes againſt it, it was truly triumphant; and the nation in general became convinced, that it was juſt and reaſonable, and deſerved to be liſtened to and encouraged *(i)*. And from

(i) In the works of Dr. Jebb, lately ſo well exhibited to the public, may be ſeen ſome memorials of what paſſed at the time, with many important obſervations, which may be of ſignal uſe upon any future application.

from that day may be dated the general diſpoſition towards a reformation in our eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem throughout the country, and alſo for an amendment in the forms of public worſhip; which laſt has been more apparent ſince, and now much prevails. Although the leading clergy ſeem to have taken a contrary ply, as is but too evident from the american tranſaction relating to the creed of Athanaſius above-mentioned, and from *(k)* the ſermon on *the duty of contending*

(*k*) Dr. Horne, in a note to this ſermon, p. 17, recomends Mr. Leſlie's writings, as an antidote to the opinions of the ſocinians, or unitarians. Together with them, I could wiſh you to read three ſhort tracts of Mr. Emlyn's, which are placed at the beginning of the ſecond volume of his works, *viz.*

1. Remarks on Mr. Charles Leſlie's laſt dialogue, on the ſocinian controverſy.

2. A vindication of the remarks, &c.

3. An examination of Mr. Charles Leſlie's laſt dialogue, relating to the *ſatisfaction* of Chriſt.

For ſtrength and acuteneſs of reaſoning, and juſt interpretation of ſcripture, you will meet with few equal to this candid and eminent writer.

To another part of his ſermon, p. 20, Dr. Horne alſo ſubjoins this note; "An excellent little tract was printed "for Rivington, in 1774. I wiſh 20,000 of theſe were "diſperſed

contending for the faith, i. e. the doctrine of the trinity, (with a diſcourſe on the *trinity in unity* annexed) preached by the preſident of Magdalen, in his place as dean of Canterbury, before the preſent archbiſhop on his primary viſitation, with large approbation; and now laſt, from the letter of an undergraduate to Dr. Prieſtley, by the ſame hands, the better to induce you to acquieſce in things as they are, and to prevent making any examination yourſelves.

It is a vain thought to expect, by ſuch weak attempts, to lay aſleep the ſpirit of free inquiry into the ſcriptures, which has begun to be awakened among you, and in the nation at large; and that all murmur and

" diſperſed through the kingdom, at this time. It was in-
" titled, *A preſervative againſt the publications diſperſed by*
" *modern ſocinians; in which the impiety and abſurdity of*
" *their principles are clearly ſhewn; addreſſed by a country*
" *clergyman to his pariſhioners.*"

Concerning this piece ſo highly commended, I ſhould chearfully ſubmit it to any rational inquirer to determine, whether it does not rather tend to recomend the perſons and the doctrine, which the author oppoſes.

and diſſatisfaction with the doctrines, and forms of worſhip impoſed by the awful and almoſt univerſal authority of ages, will be quieted and ſuppreſſed.

So did the ſuperior eccleſiaſtics, at the beginning of the 16th century, in our own and other countries of this weſtern world, exert every effort to ſtifle the very general cry and demand for a reformation; and fondly imagined they had accompliſhed the wiſhed-for point in Leo the Xth's eaſy and voluptuous reign; when an obſcure german monk, but of courage the moſt invincible, and equal piety and integrity, ſuddenly ſtarted from his cell, rouſed by ſome of the moſt glaring abuſes, and profligate profanation of things ſacred then carrying on under the pope's immediate order and authority; and the moſt outrageous oppoſition being made to his reaſonable objections, without the leaſt conceſſion or redreſs given, he was excited to go on detecting and expoſing one grievance and corruption after another, till the eyes of many provinces and kingdoms were opened, and threw off the papal yoke: happy would it have been, if they had

had not all of them impoſed another of their own, which in time has turned out moſt grievous to be borne; and which I am ſorry to note, your ſuppoſed brother undergraduate ſeeks to bind upon you for ever.

The *clerical petitioners*, who had their meeting at the Feathers' tavern, Strand, gave their reaſons to the public, why they judged it more expedient, and preferable, to apply to the legiſlature for relief, rather than to the biſhops alone.

But there was *another clerical aſſembly* at the time, compoſed of a different ſet of men, who met at Tenniſon's library near the Mews, with a view, as they expreſs themſelves, "to requeſt a reviſal of the "articles and liturgy, and forms of ſub- "ſcription; but judged it fitting to con- "ſult firſt their ſpiritual ſuperiors, and to "be directed by them.

"Upon application to the archbiſhop of "Canterbury, (Dr. Cornwallis) he replied "in terms of candour to their intentions,

" and that he would lay their wiſhes before " his brethren."

The ſmall ſheet of paper in my poſſeſſion, whence the above is taken, was printed and circulated *to inform the clergy* (who had joined in great numbers with the leaders in this application to the biſhops,) *what had been done; and that they might not ſuppoſe the matter wholly dropped, while it remained ſuſpended.* It is dated, December, 1772.

Some of the principal gentlemen concerned in this aſſociation to procure a reviſal of the articles, liturgy, and forms of ſubſcription of the church of England, now fill very high ſtations in it; viz. Dr. Porteus, lately moved to the ſee of London; Dr. Yorke, Bp. of Ely, Dr. Percy, Bp. of Dromore, in Ireland; and probably others, who may be unknown to me as having taken any part in it.

It is obvious for you here to remark, thoſe among you particularly who are candidates for the ſacred miniſtry, how different the preſident of Magdalen's ſentiments of the church of England are, from thoſe entertained by theſe his now ſpiritual ſuperiors.

He

He is for having you to ſubſcribe to and acquieſce for life in things as they are now eſtabliſhed, and prohibits all inquiry by condemning every thought of any alteration in any reſpect, (*l*) unleſs it firſt occur to, and be put in execution by the governors of the church. But *theſe gentlemen* have, by their example, pointed out to you, may I not ſay, that it is *your duty*, to examine your creeds and articles, and the nature of your ſubſcription to them, how far right and juſtifiable; and have declared, that an amendment is needed in your articles, liturgy, and forms of ſubſcription. And as it would be an injury to them, to ſuppoſe that their ſentiments on theſe points are contrary to what they publiſhed them a few years ago, you may reaſonably expect, that they will not let the matter be wholly dropped; and that ſomething will be attempted by them, of what good men have

(*l*) 'If the compilers were miſtaken in an article *of* '*the thirty-nine*, it is incumbent on our governors, when 'convinced of ſuch miſtake, to alter or expunge that ar-'ticle.' Letter to Dr. Prieſtley, by an undergraduate, p. 27.

long expected in theſe matters, for the honour of religion, and the eaſe of honeſt minds. Nor can it be ſuppoſed, that they would now allege, that the ſtate of things is altered from what it was, and the creeds and articles and ſubſcriptions of the church, diſcovered to be no grievance at all. The reverſe of this is unqueſtionably the truth. From the free diſcuſſion which theſe matters have undergone for theſe fifteen years paſt, the unreaſonableneſs of many things, to which you are called to ſubſcribe and to conform, hath more appeared, and their contradiction to the ſcriptures, the only ſtandard of doctrine and worſhip, been ſtill more convincingly demonſtrated.

A learned perſon of rank in the univerſity of Oxford, a very few years ago, after giving the ſtrongeſt arguments for a new verſion of our engliſh bible, with great good ſenſe recomends, that "acts of that nature done "by authority, in which are included litur-"gies or public forms of worſhip, ſhould be "reviſed at the diſtance of half a century,

"to

" to take off the almoſt ſacred veneration " the people have for things, which not " their merit, but antiquity alone has conſe- " crated. But foreſeeing, that ſome would object to a plan of this kind, from an apprehenſion that an eagerneſs for reformation might in ſuch caſes carry matters to too great a length; he ſtates the objection and anſwers it himſelf.

" Would the innovator," he puts it, " herewith reſt ſatisfied! would he not de- " ſire after this a reviſal of the liturgy, " with the xxxix articles; and proceed " from eccleſiaſtical, to civil matters? Theſe " are not neceſſary," replies he to the objector, " perhaps not probable conſe- " quences: but allowing they were; what " nobler object could the parliament, could " the convocation have under their con- " templation, than the petitions of ſerious " and well-diſpoſed men; preſented, at " proper intervals, with becoming humility, " praying, not to be releaſed (as in a late " inſtance) from the bonds by which ſo- " ciety is united, but that means might be " deviſed, the moſt efficacious, for quieting

" their conſcientious ſcruples, and ſetting " them forward in the way of religious " improvement?"—Critical remarks on the books of Job, Proverbs, Pſalms, Eccleſiaſtes, and Canticles; pref. p. ix. by *Dr. Durell*, D.D. principal of Hertford college, and prebendary of Canterbury, 1772.

The ſame valuable and liberal author, in p. 180. of this work, ſpeaking of the curſes uttered againſt enemies, ſometimes to be met with in the book of Pſalms, makes this remark.

" How far it may be proper to continue " the reading of theſe pſalms in the daily " ſervice of our church, I leave to the con- " ſideration of the legiſlature to determine. " A chriſtian of erudition may conſider " theſe imprecations only as the natural " ſentiments of jews, which the benign re- " ligion he profeſſes, abhors and condemns. " But what are the illiterate to do, who " know not where to draw the line between " the law and the goſpel? They hear both " read, one after the other, and, I fear, too " often think them both of equal obliga- " tion; and even take ſhelter under ſcripture

" to

" to cover their curſes. Though I am con-
" ſcious I here tread on ſlippery ground, I
" will take leave to hint, that notwith-
" ſtanding the high antiquity that ſanctifies
" as it were this practice; it would, in the
" opinion of a number of wiſe and good
" men, be more for the credit of the chriſ-
" tian church, to omit a few of thoſe pſalms,
" and to ſubſtitute ſome parts of the goſ-
" pel in their ſtead. See *Les ſentimens des*
" *theologiens de Hollande*; attributed to Le
" Clerc in his younger days."

It is worthy of your notice that this judicious writer, lately taken away from this world, where he filled his honourable ſtation ſo uſefully, was of opinion, that many might have conſcientious ſcruples with reſpect to ſome things in the articles and liturgy of the church of England, and find them a bar to religious improvement; and that he not only recomends a becoming and modeſt application to governors for relief in ſuch caſes, but intimates, that it is the duty, and for the honour of the legiſlature, to liſten and attend to ſuch petitioners.

'LET no one lightly entertain ſuſpicions 'of any ſerious propoſal for the advance- 'ment of religious knowlege; nor, out 'of unreaſonable prejudice, endeavour to 'obſtruct any inquiry, that profeſſes to aim 'at the further illuſtration of the great 'ſcheme of the goſpel in general, or the 'removal of error in any part, in *doctrine*, 'in practice, or in *worſhip*. *An opinion is 'not therefore falſe, becauſe it contradicts re- 'ceived notions: but whether true or falſe, 'let it be ſubmitted to a fair examination; 'truth muſt in the end be a gainer by it, and 'appear with the greater evidence.* Where 'freedom of inquiry is maintained under 'the direction of the ſincere word of God, 'falſehood may perhaps triumph for a day; 'but to-morrow truth will certainly pre- 'vail, and every ſucceeding day will confirm 'her ſuperiority.'—Bp. *Lowth*'s viſitation ſermon, preached at Durham, 1758.

Thus, 30 years ago, did this fine writer, and eminent divine, plead Dr. Prieſtley's cauſe againſt his adverſaries, and reprobate the practice and the little arts uſed by Dr. Horne, who is for having you to con-

condemn him unheard, and ſeeks to prejudice you againſt his opinions by mere declamation, and expreſſions of aſtoniſhment and diſlike, inſtead of bringing them to the teſt of ſcripture, as Bp. Lowth recomends, whether they be true or falſe.

And ſo far was this learned man from preſuming, that all things relating to the doctrine and worſhip of the church of England were right, that he invites all its members to examine for themſelves whether they are ſo, and bids them take care, that, through unreaſonable prejudices, they do not obſtruct any inquiry, that aims at the removal of error in any point, in doctrine, in practice, or in worſhip.

And thus have you ſeen, that not only this prelate lately deceaſed, but his preſent ſucceſſor in the ſee of London, and another alſo high on the epiſcopal bench, together with other learned and approved writers of the church of England, all agree in declaring that a reviſal of her creeds, articles and forms of worſhip is much wanted, and that it is the duty of all to inquire how far they are agreeable to the word of God; which is nothing

nothing more than Dr. Prieſtley has recommended to you, before you blindly ſubſcribe to them, and ſolemnly declare them to be true and agreeable to the ſcriptures.

Whether Dr. Horne acted a fair part towards you, in aſſuming a character as being one of your own claſs, which might give him a plauſible colour and ſanction for hiding ſuch neceſſary information upon the ſubject from you, belongs to you to conſider.

SECTION III.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *character, as a philoſopher, and theologian.*

THE preſident of Magdalen, at the end of the letter, in his character of undergraduate, to Dr. Prieſtley, paſſes a ſhort compliment (*m*) upon

(*m*) "With great reſpect for your character as a man "of ſcience, and equal diſlike to your principles, as a "theologian, I am, &c.

An Undergraduate."

Oxford, April 13, 1787.

upon him, as a philoſopher, though far from having raiſed in you, in the preceding parts, one favourable idea of him in any reſpect, ſo as to make you deſirous to ſee any of his productions; and at the ſame time profeſſes, what indeed he has not been backward to diſcover, a very great diſlike to him as a divine.

As the ground of this diſlike, which he ſtrives to infuſe into you, relates to ſubjects, ſome of them of the very higheſt importance, I think you intereſted in and requeſt your attention to the fairer repreſentation, which I ſhall endeavour to give, of the opinions of one ſo obnoxious to him: and making allowance for prejudice, from which few are exempt, though my earlieſt habits and prepoſſeſſions leaned another way; and profeſſing obligations more than I can expreſs, to the writings, example, and friendſhip of this eminent perſon, nevertheleſs, I truſt you will not find my account of things far from the truth.

With all honour due, and juſtly due, to thoſe learned men, whoſe lectures you attend, I will beg leave to ſay, that you may

alſo

alſo take along with you the writings of Dr. Prieſtley in moſt branches of ſcience, and read them to advantage.

It is no ſmall thing in his favour, to recommend him, that he is already become, may I ſay it, the preceptor of nations. For not only his philoſophical and metaphyſical, but his theological works, are ſought after with avidity, and highly approved by foreigners, and ſeveral of them tranſlated into different languages on our continent. And writings in defence of chriſtianity, coming from ſuch a hand, cannot fail of raiſing curioſity, and of contributing to remove the common preſumption among unbelievers, and frequent ground of their unbelief, *viz*, that the goſpel is that ſyſtem of doctrines which is publicly eſtabliſhed in each catholic and proteſtant ſtate; whereas it is almoſt univerſally quite another thing, in reſpect both of faith, and worſhip.

Dr. Prieſtley's aim in his writings, to which all his ſtudies tend, is to promote the glory of God, beſt ſeen and manifeſted in the happineſs of his creatures; to diſcover and

and make known his wiſdom and boundleſs goodneſs, as they are exhibited to us in his revealed word, or in his glorious works abroad: for all nature is but the revelation of HIM, its great creator.

It was to theſe moſt laudable ends, that *Locke* and *Newton* conſecrated their talents, and immenſe labours. Though it is to be lamented, that the noble family by whom the manuſcript-papers of the latter have been inherited, have hitherto declined to give them to the public. Imperfect hints from a mind ſo penetrating might be of ſervice. And Sir Iſaac Newton is known to have applied himſelf in a very extraordinary manner to the ſtudy of the ſacred writings, and of all ancient writers that might illuſtrate them. Nor are we without evidence of his having been a ſtrict unitarian, holding God to be one perſon, one eternal mind, and Jeſus, the creature, and ſervant of that God.

Our author walks in the ſame path with theſe two eminent lights, who would not have diſdained to have taken him by the hand; but happily, coming after them, he devoted

devoted himſelf at an earlier hour, and with a much more fearleſs ſpirit than they, to ſtudy and illuſtrate the ſacred volume, and to wipe off that polytheiſm and irrational ſuperſtition, which they alſo ſaw, and which for ages had disfigured it.

But you will judge better of the principles by which he has been influenced, from hearing him ſpeak himſelf. In the preface to his hiſtory of Electricity, where he himſelf adds to the common ſtock of knowlege on the ſubject he treats of, whilſt he deſcribes what others had done before him; he thus paints the views of a true philoſopher, which he has uniformly aimed to make his own, p. xvi. xvii.

'A philoſopher ought to be ſomething 'greater, and better than another man. 'The contemplation of the works of God 'ſhould give a ſublimity to his virtue, 'ſhould expand his benevolence, extinguiſh 'every thing mean, baſe, and ſelfiſh in his 'nature, give a dignity to all his ſentiments, 'and teach him to aſpire to the moral per-'fections of the great author of all things. 'What great and exalted beings would

'philoſophers

'philoſophers be, would they but let the 'objects about which they are converſant, 'have their proper moral effect upon 'their minds! A life ſpent in the con-'templation of the productions of divine 'power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, would be 'a life of devotion. The more we ſee of 'the wonderful ſtructure of the world, and 'the laws of nature, the more clearly do 'we comprehend their admirable uſes, to 'make all the percipient creation happy; 'a ſentiment which cannot but fill the heart 'with unbounded love, gratitude and joy.

'Even every thing painful and diſagreea-'able in the world appears to be provided, 'as a remedy of ſome other greater incon-'venience, or a neceſſary means of a much 'greater happineſs; ſo that from this ele-'vated point of view, he ſees all temporary 'evils and inconveniences to vaniſh, in the 'glorious proſpect of the great good to 'which they are ſubſervient. Hence, he 'is able to venerate and rejoice in God, 'not only in the bright ſunſhine, but alſo 'in the darkeſt ſhades of nature, whereas

'vulgar minds are apt to be diſconcerted
'with the appearance of evil.

'Nor is the cultivation of piety uſeful
'to us only as *men*, it is even uſeful to us as
'*philoſophers*; and as true philoſophy tends
'to promote piety, ſo a generous and man-
'ly piety is reciprocally ſubſervient to the
'purpoſes of philoſophy; and this both
'in a direct and indirect manner. While
'we keep in view the great final cauſe of
'all the parts and laws of nature, we have
'ſome clue by which to trace the efficient
'cauſe. This is moſt of all obvious in
'that part of philoſophy which reſpects
'the animal creation. As the great and
'excellent Dr. Hartley obſerves. "Since
"this world is a ſyſtem of benevolence, and
"conſequently its author the object of un-
"bounded love and adoration, benevolence
"and piety are our only true guides in our
"inquiries into it; the only keys that will
"unlock the myſteries of nature, and clues
"which lead through her labyrinths. Of
"this all branches of natural hiſtory, and
"natural philoſophy, afford abundant in-
"ſtances.

"In

" In all theſe inquiries, let the inquirer " take it for granted previouſly, that every " thing is right, and the beſt that can be, " *cæteris manentibus*; that is, let him " with a pious confidence ſeek for benevo- " lent purpoſes, and he will be always di- " rected to the right road; and after a due " continuance in it, attain to ſome new " and valuable truth: whereas every other " principle and motive of examination, be- " ing foreign to the great plan on which " the univerſe is conſtructed, muſt lead into " endleſs mazes, errors, and perplexities *."

When in the ſpring of the year 1787, I aſked one, who will be allowed a moſt capable judge, how he would in a few words expreſs our common friend's merits in philoſophy; the next time I ſaw him, he gave me the following ſketch, which I tranſcribe for your peruſal; and as he accompanied it with no reſtrictions, I hope I violate no part of friendly confi-

* Hartley's Obſervations on Man, vol. ii. p. 247.

dence in making it public, and not wholly concealing *(n)* from whom I received it.

'To enumerate Dr. Prieſtley's diſco-
'veries, would in fact be, to enter into a
'detail of moſt of thoſe that have been
'made within the laſt 15 years. How many
'inviſible fluids, whoſe exiſtence evaded
'the ſagacity of foregoing ages, has he made
'known to us? The very air we breathe,
'he has taught us to analyze, to examine,
'to improve: a ſubſtance ſo little known,
'that even the preciſe effect of reſpiration
'was an enigma, until he explained it. He
'firſt made known to us the proper food
'of vegetables, and in what the difference
'between theſe and animal ſubſtances
'conſiſted. To him, pharmacy is in-
'debted

Richd Kirwan Esqr

(n) ——— well known to the philoſophical world by his own diſcoveries; who lately left this country on private concerns of his family. To myſelf, and to the friends of ſcience and truth in general, on this ſide the water, he is a great loſs, but his native land will be the gainer: a chriſtian from deep inquiry and conviction; and a worſhipper of the one only true God, and parent of the univerſe.

'debted for the method of making artifi-
'cial mineral waters, as well as for a ſhorter
'method of preparing other medicines;
'metallurgy, for more powerful and cheaper
'ſolvents; and chemiſtry, for ſuch a va-
'riety of diſcoveries, as it would be tedious
'to recite: diſcoveries, which have new-
'modelled that ſcience, and drawn to it,
'and to this country, the attention of all
'Europe. It is certain, that ſince the year
'1773, the eye and regards of all the learn-
'ed bodies in Europe, have been directed
'to this country by his means. In every
'philoſophical treatiſe his name is to be
'found, and in almoſt every page. They
'all own that moſt of their diſcoveries are
'due, either to the repetition of his diſ-
'coveries, or to the hints ſcattered through
'his works.'

It has indeed ſometimes happened, that profound mathematicians and philoſophers, through a confined attention to that kind of evidence, which is ſtrictly demonſtrative, have become incompetent judges of thoſe probable arguments, affording no leſs certainty, by which a divine revelation

is proved, and its doctrines aſcertained; and have either intirely rejected, or reaſoned very imperfectly concerning it. But Dr. Prieſtley's genius is equal to all ſubjects; and remarkable for ſelecting only the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſuitable arguments upon every one that he handles, and applying and arranging them with exquiſite method and ſimplicity; ſo as to be intelligible to every capacity, and ſeldom to fail to work conviction in the unprejudiced mind. It may indeed be ſaid of his writings, as has been ſaid of ſome others, that perſons may learn from them to reaſon juſtly without having recourſe to formal treatiſes of logic. I ſpeak not this in the way of panegyric. I could name ſome of the firſt maſters of reaſoning in this kingdom, and who are allowed to be ſo, who attribute this excellency to our author's compoſitions. And hence it is, that as his ſingular probity, and his diſcernment, will never let him undertake a ſubject which he does not believe himſelf capable of ſupporting by juſt argument, it has ſeldom failed but that in moſt of his controverſies, he has generally had the voice of all intelligent

ligent and unbiaſſed readers with him. And I cannot ſuffer myſelf to doubt of finding the ſame diſpoſitions in you, with regard to the charges, which Dr. Horne, in your names, advances againſt him; which we are proceeding to conſider.

SECTION IV.

OF THE CHARGES AGAINST DR. PRIESTLEY FOR HAVING NO FIXED CREED.

Important truth not to be concealed. Offence wrongly taken at Dr. Prieſtley's *publication of the progreſs of his inquiries. Impartial inquirers have no fixed creed. Service of Dr.* Prieſtley's *writings to the cauſe of the goſpel. Reaſons of Dr.* Horne's *not ſeeing this.*

THE famous Burnet of the Charter-houſe, after having delivered his own ſentiments, with great force of argument, from reaſon and ſcripture, and in a moſt affecting ſtrain, againſt the eternity of future puniſhments, cloſes the whole with this caution; with

which he ſays ſome of the ancient fathers, who were of the ſame ſentiment, always accompanied the declaration of it:

(o) "However freely (ſays he to his 'readers) you may thus ſee cauſe to think 'concerning hell, and the future puniſh-'ments of the wicked, in your own breaſt 'and in your cloſet; you muſt be careful 'to uſe the commonly received language 'concerning them, in public and before the 'people. For the bulk of mankind are ſo 'violently

(o) "De inferno, et futuris impiorum ſuppliciis, hæc dixiſſe ſufficiat, modo ſubjicias illud monitum, quod a præfatis patribus, ubi hoc tractant argumentum, ſæpius adhiberi ſolet. Nimirum, quicquid apud te ſtatuas, intus et in pectore, de his pœnis, eternis vel non: recepta doctrina verbiſque utendum eſt cum populo, et cum peroratur ad vulgus; præceps nempe in vitium, et ſola formidine pœnæ a malis abſterrendum. Præterea, inter bonos etiam ſunt infantes et adulti, *lacte*, vel *cibo ſolidiore*, pro cujuſque viribus, *alendi*. Horum non minus habenda eſt ratio; nec temere mutanda eſt parvulorum aut infirmorum diæta, ne intemperies oriatur, et in morbos incidant. Progreſſum providentiæ, in mundo ſenſim ad perfectionem promovendo, et illuminanda gente humana, ſemper ante oculos, ſemper in conſiliis habere oportet: atque pari paſſu procedendum in ſtudiis et conatibus noſtris, donec eo perventum fuerit, ut quod *in aurem audivimus*, *in ſolariis præaicare liceat*."

Burnet de Stat. mort. et reſurgent. p. 311. 312.

'violently bent on vice, that they are only 'to be reſtrained and affrighted from it by 'a dread of puniſhment. Even among thoſe 'that are better characters, you are to at- 'tend to their caſe, and *feed them with milk,* '(1 Cor. iii. 2.) *or ſtrong meat,* as may ſuit, 'and not raſhly alter the diet of weak chriſ- 'tians, leſt they be hurt by the change. 'And herein we are to imitate the methods 'of divine providence in enlightening man- 'kind, and bringing its ſchemes to per- 'fection; and to manage the fruits of our 'ſtudies and reſearches in the ſame way, 'till things come to that ſtate, in the which, 'what *we have heard with the ear, we may* '*ſpeak on the houſe-top*"

This learned perſon's reaſons for caution and ſilence upon this ſubject, however well intended, have ſomething unſound in them; and are by no means to be approved. For,

1. You are on no account to declare or to teach any thing, which you do not believe to be true. But this is what he recommends, viz. to hold forth the popular language concerning hell-torments, when you do not believe them to be eternal.

2. On

2. On the contrary, when you are led to treat upon the ſubject, you ſhould with mildneſs and good temper, if it be your perſuaſion, ſhew, that the language of the ſcriptures is miſunderſtood, when men would infer from it the endleſs duration of the ſufferings of wicked men; and alſo that ſuch a doctrine is wholly incompatible with the ideas we cannot but entertain of the infinite goodneſs of God: and there you are to leave it, without fear of any harm to the morals of chriſtians reſulting from it, and without any doubt but that the moſt laſting puniſhments certainly denounced againſt the evil and impenitent, though they be far from eternal, cannot but have effect upon all that are capable of being deterred from their vicious practices.

3. With reſpect to the methods of divine providence, they are no rule to us in ſuch things. Our time is ſhort, and our buſineſs is to make known important truth to others, as it is diſcovered to us. It has been owing to a prudence of this kind not always to be commended, that there is ſtill ſo much darkneſs and ſuperſtition among chriſtians, and the ſcripture ſo little underſtood.

Happily

Happily for mankind, and for the progreſs of truth, others have thought and acted differently; and eſpecially Dr. Prieſtley, in our own times.

The fact with regard to him was this, as appears from his writings and incidental accounts of himſelf.

Upon that examination, which it becomes every chriſtian to make, of what was inſtilled into him in his youth, from the ſacred writings, concerning the Being that made him, and his expectations from him, he ſaw the ſtrongeſt reaſons to believe the bible itſelf to contain an authentic hiſtory of divine extraordinary communications to mankind; but has found cauſe, from time to time, to alter his opinions concerning many things that had been taught him out of it, and particularly concerning one thing held the moſt ſacred of all others, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Chriſt.

He would not have acted the part of a rational being, if he had taken things of ſuch importance for true, as others delivered them to him, without examining the ſcriptures, whether they were ſo or not.

And

And he would not have done his duty as an honeſt man, if on receiving further light, he had continued to hold forth and profeſs his former opinions, which he was perſuaded had no foundation in the word of God.

He was moreover convinced, that it was highly incumbent on him, for the honour of true religion and the good of mankind, not to ſtifle the light of truth which he had thus diſcovered, but to publiſh it to others, that they might alſo be benefited by it. And every lover of truth will be thankful to him; eſpecially as he has always fairly and minutely given his reaſons to the public for any important change of religious ſentiment, and thereby enabled others to judge, whether it has been made on good and ſufficient grounds; and has invited all to ſhew, if in any reſpect he hath miſrepreſented facts, or reaſoned wrong upon them, or miſtaken the meaning of ſcripture.

But it having happened, that with the openneſs which is almoſt peculiar to him,

and

and in the freedom of debate with his friend Dr. Price, where he is mentioning the little fondneſs he had for the opinions he had received from his education, and how much he had receded from them, he concludes with ſaying, *I will not pretend to ſay, when my creed will be fixed*; it is not to be imagined, with what eagerneſs Dr. Horne ſeizes this, and runs diviſions upon it without end, and would perſuade you, that the author of ſuch a declaration muſt certainly be a man from whom no one can learn any thing or depend upon, as having no fixed creed whatſoever. But indeed in the ſenſe in which Dr. Prieſtley declares this, you will find that good man, archbiſhop Tillotſon agreeing with him, as will alſo every perſon of good ſenſe, and calm reflexion, and that is under no wrong bias. For that worthy prelate, in his funeral ſermon for Dr. Whichcot, having mentioned it as cuſtomary with learned men, at a certain age, "to *make their underſtandings*, as he expreſſes it, and to fix and ſettle their judgments on important points, from which they were not to recede;"

" recede;" he commends his (*p*) deceaſed friend, that '*he was ſo wiſe as to be willing* '*to learn to the laſt*;' i. e. he had never any fixed creed.

I am

(*p*) I would beg leave to recommend to you a prayer of admirable ſimplicity, compoſed by archbiſhop Tillotſon, and preſerved to us in his works. It ſhews the excellency of his ſpirit, and how far he was from approving an unſearching temper in the things relating to God.

O Lord God of truth, I humbly beſeech thee to enlighten my mind by thy Holy Spirit, that I may diſcern the true way to eternal ſalvation, and to free me from all prejudice and paſſion, from every corrupt affection and intereſt, that may either blind or ſeduce me in my ſearch after it.

Make me impartial in my inquiry after truth, and ready whenever it is diſcovered to me to receive it in the love of it, to obey it from the heart, and to practiſe it in my life, and to continue ſtedfaſt in the profeſſion of it to the end of my days.

I perfectly reſign myſelf, O Lord, to thy conduct and direction, in confidence that thy mercy and goodneſs is ſuch, that thou wilt not ſuffer thoſe who ſincerely deſire to know the truth, and rely upon thy goodneſs, finally to miſcarrry. And if in any thing, which concerns the true worſhip and ſervice of thee my God, and the everlaſting happineſs of my ſoul, I am in any error and miſtake, I earneſtly beg of thee to convince me of it, and to lead me into the way of truth, and to confirm and eſtabliſh me in it daily more and more.

And I beſeech thee O Lord, always to preſerve in me a great compaſſion and ſincere charity towards thoſe that are in ignorance

I am ſorry to have occaſion here to obſerve, that upon the moſt important of all ſubjects, even with reſpect to the God you are to worſhip, Dr. Horne is not willing to permit you, to make free inquiry, or to have any underſtanding of your own, firſt or laſt: but all is to be ready made for you, by thoſe who are ſuppoſed to have conſulted the ſcriptures long before you were born, and to have ſettled the ſenſe in which you are to take every thing in them, upon this ſubject, as well as many others of great moment.

But this is not all the bad tendency which Dr. Horne finds in this innocent ſaying of Dr. Prieſtley's, that *he knew not when his creed would be fixed.* From his departing from the commonly received opinion concerning

rance of thy truth, beſeeching thee to take pity on them, and to bring them to the knowlege of it, that they may be ſaved.

And becauſe our bleſſed Saviour hath promiſed, that all who do his will ſhall know his doctrine, grant, o Lord, that I may never knowingly offend thee in any thing, or neglect to do what I know to be thy will and my duty.

Grant, o heavenly Father, theſe my humble and hearty requeſts, for his ſake who is the way, the truth, and the life, my bleſſed ſaviour and redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt.

cerning the plenary inſpiration of the ſacred writers, and of conſequence maintaining that in all things written by them, they are not alike infallible, the preſident of Magdalen ſpares not to inſinuate, that this may lead at laſt to deny *(q)* the reſurrection of Chriſt, and of courſe renounce chriſtianity and the the bible. Nay, by his way of mentioning an advocate of atheiſm, whom Dr. Prieſtley had confuted, he drops a grave hint for you to take up, as if he might end there himſelf.

And this is, without reſerve, thrown out againſt the man, whom you may not heſitate to call one of the moſt able defenders of the being of a God, and of the truth of the divine revelation contained in the hebrew and chriſtian ſcriptures, that the world ever ſaw. This, impartial poſterity will confeſs, however ſome now gainſay, and ſpeak evil of him.

And permit me to ſay, that much as you may have acquired from the inſtructions

(q) Letter of an undergraduate to Dr. Prieſtley, p. 19, &c.

ſtructions of your tutors, or your own reading, you will find that Dr. Prieſtley's *Inſtitutes of natural and revealed Religion*, will furniſh you with many curious, original, uſeful obſervations, and new trains of reaſoning, to ſettle your belief of the exiſtence of one firſt cauſe of all things, the ſole omnipotent creator and parent of the univerſe, and raiſe your devout affections towards him, and alſo to confirm your faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and increaſe your thankfulneſs for that diſcovery of the divine ineffable goodneſs, and deſigns for your everlaſting happineſs, which we have by the goſpel.

Dr. Prieſtley's *Hiſtory of the corruptions of Chriſtianity*, will give you the greateſt ſatisfaction, as you will there ſee traced out, with vaſt labour and exquiſite diſcernment, how this divine religion of the goſpel was at firſt, through the prejudices of thoſe who received it, unavoidably depraved by many polytheiſtic errors and ſuperſtitions, although its founder, the bleſſed Jeſus, taught the worſhip of the Father alone in ſpirit and in truth, and that his favour was no

other way to be ſecured, but by a perſeverance in or timely return to the paths of virtue, and a holy obedience. You will there alſo with pleaſure ſee the preſent tendency of things in the chriſtian world, towards a reſtoration of the true religion of the goſpel, and its final eſtabliſhment on on the firmeſt foundations.

And his *Letters to a philoſophical Unbeliever*, Part i. ii. a work ſingular in its kind, and moſt admirable, will quiet your minds with reſpect to the objections which have been raiſed againſt the being of a God, and a providence, and the divine miſſions of Moſes and of Jeſus; and prepare you to meet the powerful arguments, which are frequently urged againſt them both, the latter eſpecially, in company, as well as in books; which you will perceive to have their ſource and all their ſtrength, not from the goſpel itſelf, but from the groundleſs ſuperſtitious doctrines grafted upon it.

And now if you aſk, how a ſcholar and eminent divine, can overlook this and *much more*, which has been accompliſhed by this celebrated writer, for the vindication and

ſupport

ſupport of divine revelation and the goſpel, and ſtrive to perſuade you that he has done harm to the cauſe, and is even verging towards infidelity and atheiſm; it is eaſy to perceive, that Dr. Horne's prejudices deprive him of all true judgment in the caſe, by making him place the religion of Chriſt in thoſe things and doctrines, in which its divine author did not place it, and indeed knew nothing of; ſo that he holds it to be a duty by all means to oppoſe Dr. Prieſtley, who denies many of thoſe things, which the other believes to be the moſt ſacred parts of the goſpel, to be any part of it at all; and in particular maintains, that there is no God but one, the ſingle perſon of the univerſal Father alone; and that Jeſus Chriſt is a creature of that God, like all the reſt of us, but moſt highly favoured and diſtinguiſhed by him.

From this account you will form your own judgments, and what abatements are to be made in Dr. Horne's repreſentations of Dr. Prieſtley's ſentiments. In p. 8. 9. of his undergraduate's letter, he produces a long liſt of accuſations, which ſhew his light

manner of exhibiting Dr. Prieſtley to you, and of putting, in the moſt odious light, his freedom in criticizing the ſcriptures; in which you will find that other eminent and eſteemed writers have taken as great liberties as he. I ſhall take notice of every thing of any moment alleged by him, beginning with the ſubject of inſpiration of the ſcriptures. But let us firſt hear his charges.

'Scripture, (ſays Dr. Horne,) you 'ſeem prepared to diſcard, whenever it does 'not pleaſe you. Some chapters of the 'goſpel by St. Matthew, and that by St. 'Luke, are gone, becauſe they teach the 'miraculous conception. Paul, as you 'have given the world to underſtand, does 'not always know what he is about, but 'ſometimes reaſons inconcluſively.—You 'ſay, *all that Paul could know about Adam,* '*and the effects of his ſin, he muſt have learn-*'*ed from the books of Moſes, which are as* '*open to us as they were to him:* you mean, 'I preſume, (for otherwiſe the obſervation 'is made to no purpoſe) that our expoſitions 'are of equal authority with his. And then 'your words tell us, that you *think yourſelf at* '*liberty to conſider the hiſtory which Moſes has*

'*us*

'*given us of the creation and fall of man, as*
'*the beſt he could collect from tradition.* You
'add, *in my opinion there are alſo many marks*
'*of its being a very lame account, and far*
'*from ſolving the difficulty which it ſeems*
'*intended to anſwer, namely, the introduction*
'*of death and calamity into the world.*—The
'prophets and apoſtles,' Dr. Horne continues to remark, 'certainly do not inform
'us, at every turn, that they have received
'from God that information which they
'are about to communicate to us: but
'we are aſſured, 2 Pet. i. 21. that *holy men*
'*ſpake of old as they were moved by the holy*
'*ghoſt*; and 2 Tim. iii. 16. that *all ſcripture*
'*is given by inſpiration of God.*'

SECTION V.

What is the juſt idea of the inſpiration of the ſacred writers. The certain ground upon which we go in this way of conſidering it; and its advantages. Dr. Horne's *great error with reſpect to the particular inſpiration of the writer of the epiſtle to the Hebrews.*

As the kind and degree of divine influence, or inſpiration, under which the ſa-

cred writers compoſed their reſpective books, is the hinge on which this accuſation turns, I ſhall endeavour to lay before you ſuch an account of the matter, as may be of ſome aſſiſtance to form your own judgments upon it, before I conſider the particular allegations, which you are ſuppoſed to bring againſt Dr. Prieſtley.

The ſacred writers of the New Teſtament, (and what is ſaid of them is applicable, *cæteris paribus*, to the writers of the Old Teſtament,) had not the matter they treat of, nor the words, dictated in a ſupernatural manner to them, by which they were to expreſs themſelves, in penning down their reſpective hiſtories of the goſpel of Chriſt; but were left to collect facts from their proper ſources, and to tell them in their own way.

Thus St. Luke, in the preface to his goſpel, deſires that his account of things may be received by the friend to whom he addreſſes it, as worthy of credit, for his diligence in gathering it from thoſe who had been eye-witneſſes, and miniſters of the word. If he had believed that inſpiration had been neceſſary to give credit to his narrative, he would not have failed to have mentioned,

that

that he had his knowlege and information immediately from God.

The ſame may be ſaid of all the evangeliſts, with reſpect to the different ſubjects which they record. And had it occurred to them, as it did to Luke, to take notice of this circumſtance; they would have told us, that they had been careful to put down with fidelity and exactneſs, what they had ſeen and heard themſelves, reſpecting their divine maſter Jeſus, as alſo what they had learned from other competent witneſſes.

The four evangeliſts therefore, after having acquainted themſelves, in the beſt manner they could, with the life, miracles, and diſcourſes of Chriſt, compiled their ſeveral goſpels, in the form we now have them; with great judgment confining themſelves intirely to the repreſentation of facts, without mixing their own opinions, or deſcanting upon them.

This has been, and I believe is, the ſentiment of judicious chriſtians, on this nice ſubject: whilſt others have pleaded for what they call, a *plenary* inſpiration of the ſacred writers; i. e. that both in the things related,

lated, and the language in which they conveyed them, they were under an immediate divine influence and direction.

In the preface to his harmony of the four evangeliſts, Dr. Prieſtley has ſhewn, that this high notion of the inſpiration of the ſcriptures, of the goſpel in particular, the ſubject he is treating upon, is contrary to fact; the narratives of the different evangeliſts being not written with that perfect conſiſtency and agreement with each other, which ſuch a ſuppoſition neceſſarily requires.

And moreover, 'as it ſeems to have been the plan of divine providence, never to furniſh miracles, where natural cauſes were ſufficient to procure the deſired effect;" ſuch a prodigious divine *apparatus* of a particular inſpiration of each ſacred writer was wholly unneceſſary in the preſent caſe, as all the great ends of the goſpel, and its credibility, are ſatisfactorily ſecured by the teſtimony of men of the moſt unqueſtionable integrity, who were about our Saviour's perſon, or of others who converſed with them; who drew up different relations of the ſame facts concerning him, diſagreeing only in ſuch minute

nute particulars as might be expected from men who wrote without communication with each other, and ſuch as ſerves to corroborate and confirm their general and agreeing teſtimony to every thing of importance.

And he remarks in the ſame way, that ſince providence has thought proper to intruſt this valuable depoſit of the ſcriptures in human hands, to the fidelity of uninſpired tranſcribers and printers for near 1800 years, it cannot be thought inconſiſtent with the ſame plan, to have it conveyed to us in a ſimilar manner from the beginning: the apoſtles being naturally as capable of relating and writing an account of what they heard and ſaw, as other perſons would be to copy the account after them.'

In Section xi. of Obſervations prefixed to his 'Harmony of the evangeliſts,' Dr. Prieſtley has ſuggeſted a probable account, how theſe ſacred writers might be poſſeſſed of an exact knowlege of the things related by them, though their narrative of them was drawn up ſeveral years after the events themſelves; and be qualified to compoſe their hiſtories, ſuch as we now have them.

If

If, without offence, I may be allowed to adviſe, you ſhould by all means procure this valuable work of Dr. Prieſtley's; not only for your information and ſatisfaction on this weighty point of the inſpiration of the ſcriptures, and what will ſave you much trouble in peruſing other authors upon the ſubject; but as containing much uſeful matter, needful for the right underſtanding of the goſpel-hiſtory, ſome of it not to be met with in any other books.

Nor is the account here given, too depreciating, or ſuch as reduces the writings of the evangeliſts to the level of common hiſtories. For they may ſtill be termed in ſome degree *inſpired* writings, as they contain a faithful detail of the doctrine of Chriſt, which he received immediately from God.

So that when we read the teachings of Chriſt in the goſpel, or his doctrine as held forth in the epiſtles of his firſt choſen followers, it is the ſame as if God himſelf ſpake to us. And we know the doctrine of the apoſtles, in their ſeveral writings, to be from God, by its agreement with that which

which Chriſt delivered; or by their informing us, whenever they declare any new doctrine, that they received it by a particular revelation made to themſelves. So St. Paul, for example, informs the chriſtians of Corinth, that a part of the human ſpecies *(r)* would be exempted from the common ſtroke of death, which all others were deſtined to feel; namely, thoſe his true and virtuous followers who ſhould be found alive at the ſecond coming of Chriſt; when by the operation of the divine power, they would be changed, and rendered incorruptible and immortal, at the ſame moment, with the innumerable dead ſhould be raiſed to life, who had been, a longer or ſhorter time, aſleep in their graves.

This way of conſidering the inſpiration of the penmen of the New Teſtament, as confined to the doctrine which they received

(r) Behold I ſhew you a myſtery; all of us ſhall not ſleep, *but we ſhall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, (for the trumpet ſhall ſound) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible*; *and* we ſhall be changed, 1 Cor. xv. 51. 52.

ceived from Chriſt, you will find to approve itſelf to you, the more you reflect upon it, and to be moſt agreeable to fact, and the real ſtate of the ſacred writings.

We are thus alſo left more at liberty, and more capable of defending our holy religion, when we are not anſwerable for the juſtneſs of every word, and the propriety and aptneſs of every quotation in the New Teſtament made from the Old, or the accuracy of the writer's arguments in all reſpects. We may then conſider the apoſtles, what they really appear to have been, as men of good ſenſe and the moſt upright diſpoſitions, who would not to gain the whole world advance any thing they did not believe to be true; but who alſo were liable to prejudices, and fallible, like other men, and therefore might eaſily be miſtaken in their reaſonings on incidental ſubjects, and in the interpretation and application of their antient divine law. And any ſmall miſtake of this kind would not affect the competency and ſufficiency of their evidence to the moſt important facts on which the goſpel ſtands; viz. the miracles by which

which our Lord proved his divine miſſion; the diſcovery made by him of the will of the heavenly Father of all, and the way to ſecure his favour; the aſſurance of a reſurrection to a future immortal life after death given by him, and confirmed by his own reſurrection. Nay, high divine powers communicated, or abſolute infallibility in their reaſonings, would add nothing to the apoſtles' teſtimony concerning plain facts, which depends on quite different circumſtances.

Dr. Horne, in one place, gives a ſpecimen of his own method of conſidering the inſpiration of the apoſtles, in which he makes you parties as uſual; but from the little that has now been ſuggeſted to you, I apprehend you will be far from approving the way he takes.

Speaking of St. Paul's epiſtle to the Hebrews, he calls it, p. 40, 'a *divine expoſition* 'of *the Old Teſtament*, and not one of the leaſt 'among the many inſtances of God's good-'neſs to his church, that he has cauſed it 'to be written and handed down to us.'

For

For this however, you have nothing but his own aſſertion, which, by itſelf, can be of no weight.

His notion is built upon the ſuppoſition, that the law of Moſes was divinely contrived, and appointed, to prefigure, and denote the things concerning Chriſt, and the goſpel; but in an obſcure manner, and covered with a veil, which he imagines St. Paul here to remove, by a ſupernatural knowlege communicated to him.

But as we do not find that Moſes, or the prophets, teach or intimate any thing of the kind, it is not credible, that their divine law ſhould have ſuch an important ſignification, and be wholly concealed from them.

And ſtill farther, St. Paul himſelf never mentions that he had any particular revelation upon this point, to acquaint him, that ſuch was the divine intention in the appointment of their law and ſacrifices: ſo that what Dr. Horne ſpeaks with ſuch confidence concerning it, ſeems to be mere imagination, without any foundation.

How

How then, you will inquire, are we to judge of the intent of all theſe references to the moſaic law, in this epiſtle to the hebrews, and what degree of inſpiration are we to attribute to it?

With reſpect to the latter inquiry, it is to be obſerved, that in all theſe occaſional writings of the apoſtles, no new revelation is to be expected in them, unleſs when expreſsly pointed out by themſelves; which we do not find here done by St. Paul. But he, as well as the other apoſtles, being fully informed of the goſpel-doctrine, and deeply impreſſed with the importance of it, would always be able, without any *immediate* divine aſſiſtance, to ſtate, and explain and apply it, to any particular purpoſe, caſe, or emergency, that called for it, either in preaching or writing. And their doctrine, thus delivered, could not be called mere human teaching, or the word of man, but that which Jeſus Chriſt received by inſpiration, and communicated to his followers, *the word of God.*

The ſpecial occaſion of his inditing this epiſtle, and the perſons to whom it was ſent,

ſent, and their ſituation, will unfold the reaſon of that continual reference to the moſaic inſtitutions, which we meet with in this epiſtle, beyond any other of his writings.

Addreſſing himſelf then, as is generally acknowleged, to hebrew chriſtians, reſiding in Judea, in dangerous times, juſt before the breaking out of their fatal war againſt the romans, when they were under many temptations to deſert the goſpel, his chief deſign is to confirm them in their adherence to it. And the argument moſt likely to turn them back to judaiſm, being this, that the goſpel tended to aboliſh their divine religion, their prieſthood and ſacrifices, without giving them an equivalent in lieu of it, this eminent teacher makes it his buſineſs to ſhew the ſuperiority of Chriſt, in character and office, to Moſes; and even to angels, by whoſe inſtrumentality they ſuppoſed their law to have been given; and teaches at large, by compariſon, that Chriſt was a better high prieſt than any under their law, and his death, or ſacrifice, more efficacious and acceptable to God, than their legal ſacrifices.

Not that Chriſt was properly a prieſt, or his death properly a ſacrifice: but our apoſtle, a jew writing to jews, ſpeaks to them in their own way, in terms of alluſion to their old religion and its ceremonies; and intended to ſignify this only by it, that whatever advantages they ſuppoſed that they had from their high prieſts and ſacrifices, chriſtians derived far more and greater from Chriſt.

That this was the apoſtle's intent, in applying ſo much of the jewiſh hiſtory and ritual to his preſent purpoſe, I perſuade myſelf you will find on the matureſt examination to be the truth; and that in this way of interpreting his letter to his countrymen, you have ſome ſure rule and plan by which to proceed; but in the method which Dr. Horne's prejudices leads him to embrace, you are wholly left to ingenious conjecture, and imagination.

And though there will ſoon be an opportunity of farther inquiry into the ſuppoſed prieſtly character of Chriſt, his interceſſion, and making atonement for us, you will perhaps at preſent ſee cauſe to agree with me, that

there is no ground for that extreme diſſatisfaction, in which you are made to join with the preſident of Magdalen, at the following paſſage which he cites from the ſequel to the apology on reſigning the vicarage of Catterick, p. 88. 89. 'Our Lord never 'called himſelf an high prieſt, nor is 'ſpoken of as ſuch by any of the four hiſ-'torians of his life and of the firſt propaga-'tion of his religion among jews and gen-'tiles; nor is he ſo ſtiled by any of the 'writers of the New Teſtament, except the 'author of this epiſtle to the hebrews. From 'whence we may conclude, that neither 'Chriſt, nor the evangeliſts eſteemed this 'to be any real part of his character, or 'needful to be attended to by his followers.'

SECTION VI.

SECTION VI.

Moſes's account of the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, much miſrepreſented, through the bias of wrong religious ſyſtems. It is probable, according to Dr. Prieſtley's *conjecture, that he did not receive that account from a particular divine inſpiration. How it is to be interpreted. Juſtification of this way of interpretation, from ſimilar inſtances in ſcripture, eſpecially, Chriſt's temptation. A farther confirmation of the probability, that Moſes drew up his hiſtory of the fall, in the manner here ſtated.*

Dr. Prieſtley, in his letters to Dr. Price, p. 158. 159. remarks, that that worthy perſon had appeared to him, without any juſt ground, to found, what he calls, the neceſſity of Chriſt's incarnation, and the efficacy of his death, on the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents; obſerving to him, that, 'if the '*fall* of man, whatever it was, had been an 'event, on which the whole chriſtian ſcheme 'was thus founded, we might have expected

'a more expreſs declaration, from ſufficient 'authority, that it was ſo. But in none of 'the prophecies, in which the Meſſiah is 'announced, is there the leaſt reference to 'this cataſtrophe, which you ſuppoſe to have 'made his incarnation neceſſary. Neither 'John the Baptiſt, nor our Saviour himſelf, 'ever ſaid any thing that could lead our 'thoughts to it. And notwithſtanding the 'frequent mention that is made of *the love 'of God in the gift of his Son* by the apoſtles, 'it is never ſaid to have been to undo any 'thing that had been done at the fall, ſome 'paſſages of Paul above excepted, who calls 'Chriſt the *laſt Adam*, and makes uſe of 'terms which imply that death was intro-'duced by Adam, as eternal life is the gift 'of God by Chriſt. But you know that the 'writings of this apoſtle abound with ana-'logies and antitheſes, on which no very 'ſerious ſtreſs is to be laid.'

However contrary this account of the fall may ſound to what you have been accuſtomed to hear, it certainly deſerves your attention for the arguments from ſcripture by which it is ſupported, and ſo far as they bring conviction

viction to your minds, you will follow them. And it is a reflection, that will very naturally occur to you, whether thoſe perſons do not take in too many foreign ideas, and fancy unknown myſteries in the divine moral government, from paſſages of ſcripture ill underſtood, who make it neceſſary for a being equal to the Almighty himſelf, or one next in dignity and time to him, to interpoſe, by condeſcending to become a weak ſuffering mortal, and ſubmit to a lingering death in torments, to repair the breach of the divine law by the two firſt frail creatures of our race; before that conſiſtently with juſtice, or with we know not what other bar and obſtacle, they could be pardoned, although they ſincerely repented of their tranſgreſſion.

And it muſt be left alſo to you to judge, whether St. Paul intended his language relating to this event, to be conſtrued in a rigorous ſenſe; or would only thereby teach, in general, the heinouſneſs and fatal wide-ſpreading effects of ſin, and the high conſideration in which a virtuous obedience is held by the almighty and holy governor of

the world, in the mighty honour done to Chriſt, by being the means and inſtrument of bringing mankind to virtue and an eternal happineſs.

Dr. Prieſtley goes on to eſtabliſh his ſentiment, by obſervations on the hiſtory of the creation and fall of man, which were cited above; in which he maintains, that we are not to look upon Moſes as writing under an immediate divine influence, but as giving us the beſt account of thoſe tranſactions, that he could collect.

Upon this, Dr. Horne cries out, 'What 'is this that I hear? it is the voice of 'Chubb, of Morgan, or of Tindal? of 'Voltaire, of Hume, or of Bolingbroke?'

It is not to be wondered at that Dr. Horne's prejudices ſhould lead him to this extreme, in a caſe, where doctrines, which he fancies to lye at the foundation of the goſpel, are called in queſtion. But before he made ſuch an exclamation, it would have been the juſter way of proceeding, to have

have ſhewn wherein Dr. Prieſtley was miſtaken. However, though he takes upon him to ſpeak in your name, you will not implicitly follow his deciſions, and will not eaſily claſs an author with profeſſed unbelievers, who holds no opinions on the ſubject, but what he thinks authorized by the ſacred writings.

Dr. Prieſtley is not alone in thinking Moſes not to have compoſed his narrative of the fall of our firſt parents from any ſupernatural information, but from ſuch materials as he found handed down concerning it. Whilſt ſome have aſſerted, that the whole narrative was to be taken literally; and that, ſerpents at that time having the faculty of ſpeech, it was a real ſerpent that ſpoke to Eve, who through envy at her ſuperior ſtation, drew her into the tranſgreſſion of the divine law; and others have ſuppoſed that there was no real ſerpent, but that the devil, under that reſemblance, was the tempter, &c. which is the opinion that generally of late has prevailed; many in

all times have been perſuaded, that ſome unhappy miſconduct of our firſt progenitors, in giving way to animal pleaſure, to the neglect of the divine command, which taught them a juſt moderation of the inferior appetites, was their crime, and the groundwork of the hiſtory we have of it; but that the introduction and craft of the ſerpent, its dialogue with Eve, &c. are only the circumſtances and embelliſhments in which it is dreſſed up, theſe being feigned and invented by Moſes in the eaſtern ſtile; who probably thought it more proper, and likely to do more good, than if he had ſpoken of the matter plainly and without a figure *(r)*,

Philo the Jew, who was cotemporary with our Lord's apoſtles, ſays, it is not a fable invented at pleaſure, but an allegory, expreſſive of what really happened under feigned images,

(r) —— *and for an apple damn mankind.*
One is ſorry to ſee men of ſenſe and gravity, that might have known better, dealing in ſuch wit as this on the Moſaic account of the fall.

images, and the ſerpent is an emblem of vicious pleaſure, &c. *(t)*

The general deſign is to inform us, that ſin and diſobedience came in with the firſt parents of mankind, and was attended with fatal conſequences to them, and their poſterity. And Moſes, as became a pious, holy man, and divine lawgiver, raiſed up by providence, and ſupported in an extraordinary manner, gives the deſcription which we have of this fatal tranſgreſſion, to deter men from gratifying irregular paſſion, and to keep them in a conſtant obedience to the will of their maker.

As

(t) See the different opinions of jews and chriſtians concerning the fall, in Le Clerc's commentary and note on Gen. iii. 1. In the following words he probably declares his own opinion, which has alſo been that of many others. 'Hæc et ſimilia alii cum viderent, eò deveniendum eſſe cenſuerunt, ut agnoſceremus ex hoc ænigmate hoc tantum liquido poſſe cognoſci; primos, ſcilicet, humani generis parentes initium feciſſe peccandi, unde innumera mala ipſis eorumque poſteris incubuere. Conſtat certe humanum genus, nunc et a multis ſeculis, corruptiſſimum fuiſſe; nec initium ejus labis ullum, infra orbis originem, deprehendi poteſt. At quomodo peccatum in orbem ingreſſum ſit, adeo ut primi peccati circumſtantias perſpicue, et ſine ulla dubitandi ratione, intelligere poſſimus, indicare eorum eſſet, qui rei interfuerunt, ſi reviviſcerent.'

As to the notion commonly received, that the devil under the ſhape of a ſerpent, was the prime party concerned in this tranſaction, and the tempter of Eve; you will be perſuaded that Moſes could not intend any thing of the kind *(u)*, nor indeed believe there

(u) Plato, in his laſt book of the right ordering of a commonwealth, is for having dramatic and epic poets baniſhed out of it, as giving wrong leſſons of human conduct, and not teaching the proper government of the paſſions.

Plutarch, in a ſet treatiſe, πως δει τον νεον ποιημάτων ακουειν, finds it neceſſary to lay down many rules and cautions to youth in reading their poets, that they might receive no harm from it.

I am grieved, that it ſhould be needful to put our incomparable poet Milton, in the ſame predicament, in ſome degree, with heathen poets. For although intending to ſerve the cauſe of true religion, by his immortal poem, Paradiſe Loſt, he has contributed, and ſtill contributes, to keep numbers in great errors about it, by the countenance which the charms of his poetry give to the falſe notion of the exiſtence of a great evil ſpirit, the devil, or ſatan, and many inferior evil ſpirits under him, perpetual enemies to God and all his deſigns of goodneſs, and particularly ſworn foes to our race; and alſo the doctrine of the pre exiſtence of Chriſt; as the ſupreme God, or as one next to him which you have ſeen, and will ſtill more ſee to be void of all ſupport from the ſcripture. Young perſons are ſurprized into a belief of theſe things by reading this poet, or rather are thereby

there to be any ſuch being, if you advert to this circumſtance; that he never afterwards, throughout his five books, takes the leaſt notice of any thing of the kind. Now if he had believed, that there really exiſted ſuch an inviſible, buſy, evil and moſt powerful ſpirit, that was continually at men's ears, ſuggeſting evil thoughts, it could not be but that he would have told of it, and have warned the

thereby ſo confirmed in the popular notions early inſtilled into them, that the impreſſion is ſeldom effaced, as few ſearch the ſcriptures for themſelves to ſee what they really teach. Whereas young perſons ſhould be taught, that Milton's ſcenery concerning Chriſt and the fallen angels, is like Homer's battles of the gods; the mere fiction of the poet, grounded on paſſages of ſcripture ill underſtood. For none ever did, or ever could oppoſe the Almighty by force; and the eminence of our Saviour's character ariſes not from any priority of exiſtence in point of time, but from thoſe virtues of piety, fortitude in ſuffering for the cauſe of truth, and the moſt enlarged benevolence, which conſtitute real excellence.

It might ſeem as though Moſes had ſome notion of the exiſtence of evil ſpirits, who had communication with mankind, from what is ſaid Lev. xix. 31. *Regard not them that have familiar ſpirits*, and from xx. 6. and Deut. xviii. 11. But it is well known to ſcholars, that the word in the original ſignifies only, thoſe that *pretended* to conjure, and foretell things to come. See 1 Chron. x. 13. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.

the Iſraelites againſt ſuch a dangerous enemy. A character ſo holy and benevolent could not have been ſilent about it.

The ſame remark you may make on the preface *(w)* to the book of Job, which ſpeaks of Satan's coming at ſtated times, into the preſence of God, of his being admitted to familiar converſe with him, and without reprehenſion encouraged and impowered to draw men to ſin and impiety; you may ſurely gather that the writer did not hold, and was far from intending to teach

(w) Now there was a day when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the LORD, *and Satan came alſo among them. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil. And Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, doth Job fear God for nought? Haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the face of the* LORD. Job i. 6, &c.

teach, that any ſuch being really exiſted, becauſe he never afterwards throughout his book names him, where frequent opportunities preſented, had he believed that there really had been any ſuch powerful, wicked agent, laying ſnares to ſeduce frail mortals: but the whole is a poetical fiction, agreeable to the dark ſuperſtition of the times; ſtill however maintaining the ſovereignty of the Almighty author and diſpoſer of all things; that nothing happens but by his appointment and permiſſion, and under his controul.

So 1 Kings xxii. (*x*) is not to be conſtrued literally of Almighty God commiſſioning

(*x*) *And he ſaid, hear thou therefore the word of the* LORD; *I ſaw the* LORD *ſitting upon his throne, and all the hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him, on his right hand, and on his left. And the* LORD *ſaid, who ſhall perſuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one ſaid on this manner, and another ſaid on that manner. And there came forth a ſpirit, and ſtood before the* LORD, *and ſaid, I will perſuade him. And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, wherewith? And he ſaid, I will go forth, and will be a lying ſpirit to the mouth of all his prophets. And he ſaid, thou ſhalt perſuade him and prevail alſo, go forth and do it. Now therefore the* LORD HATH PUT A LYING SPIRIT IN THE MOUTH OF ALL THESE *thy prophets, and the* LORD HATH SPOKEN EVIL CONCERNING THEE. 1 Kings xxii. 19, &c.

ſioning a lying ſpirit to put a lie in the mouth of Ahab's prophets; but it is a parabolical repreſentation and prediction, in the oriental ſtile, given by a true prophet, of the willing deception that Ahab was under by means of his falſe prophets, to whom he liſtened; and who would flatter him to his ruin: which was accordingly ſoon accompliſhed.

In like manner, our Saviour's temptation in the wilderneſs, or the trial to which he was putin his religious retirement, before he entered upon his moſt important office, to prepare and fortify him for the diſcharge of it; is deſcribed with the ſame eaſtern imagery, as the fall of our firſt parents.

The ſacred writers mention the holy ſpirit of God as directing him into this ſolitude. And though the devil is named in the ſcenery, there is no ground to ſuppoſe any ſuch being concerned at all. But this beloved ſon and ſervant of God, being intruſted with ſuch mighty godlike powers from him, the temptations that would reſult from his new ſituation, to abuſe his truſt, and miſlead him from his duty; whether you conſider them

as

as the natural ſuggeſtions of his own pious thoughtful mind, or as purpoſely preſented to it by the holy ſpirit, or divine power; theſe, in the high, figurative, prophetic ſtile, are perſonified and called the devil, becauſe tending to evil, if not reſiſted. And attending to the beautiful ſtory, as carried on in this view, it is eaſy to perceive that the different images, ariſing in or preſented to our Saviour's mind, were the very trials to which as a frail human creature, he would be expoſed in the courſe of his miniſtry, and which would be his bane and deſtruction if he did not guard well againſt them; *namely*, the being too much elated by the great powers lent to him, to turn them to ſelfiſh purpoſes (*y*) of private eaſe and gratification; of giddy, wanton (*z*) vanity; or a towering pride and

(*y*) *Then was Jeſus led up of the ſpirit into the wilderneſs to be tempted of the devil. And when he had faſted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungred. And when the tempter came to him he ſaid, if thou be the Son of God,* COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BE MADE BREAD.

(*z*) *Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and ſetteth him on a wing of the temple; and ſaith unto him, if thou be the Son of God,* CAST THYSELF DOWN: for it is written, he ſhall give his angels charge concerning thee, &c.

(a) and ambition; inſtead of uſing them, as he did moſt faithfully, ſolely for the ends for which they were beſtowed, to confirm his divine miſſion and doctrine.

It will be no ſmall confirmation, that Moſes did uſe a diſcretion *(b)* of his own in his manner

(a) Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and ſheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: and ſaith unto him, ALL THESE THINGS WILL I GIVE THEE, IF THOU WILL FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME, Matth. iv. 1. &c. In like manner as witches, ghoſts and apparitions, have all vaniſhed, wherever learning has lighted her torch, and men have ſought out the works of God, and diſcovered the natural cauſes of ſeemingly extraordinary appearances: ſo where the ſcriptures ſhall be ſtudied with the like freedom and diligence, it will be found, that there is no powerful unknown agent, called the devil or ſatan, no poſſeſſions of men's bodies by inferior demons, but all nature, all beings, happily under the immediate, ſole, uncontrouled direction of their infinitely wiſe and benevolent creator.

(*b*) Le Clerc has a curious remark on that part of the narrative, Gen. iii. 4, &c. which contains the ſerpent's dialogue with the *wife*, as he would have it rendered, and not *woman: viz.* that Moſes intended thereby to give a check to the pride of the Iſraelitiſh ladies, who took too much upon them, I ſuppoſe, upon their coming out of Egypt. Plurimi certe interpretes, inquit, tentatam volunt, abſente viro, Hevam

manner of relating the ſin of our firſt parents, ſo as might be moſt ſerviceable to keep his countrymen, for whom he wrote, in their obedience to the divine law; if it be alſo true, that he took a latitude of the like kind, for the ſame end, by advancing and by inſerting his account of a divine command, as given at the ſame early period, even before the fall, I mean the inſtitution of the ſabbath, though it was not *actually* inſtituted and appointed to be obſerved, till a very long time afterwards.

The prevailing opinion indeed has been in later times, that the ſabbath was inſtituted at the beginning of the world, and with a deſign to be obſerved by Adam and all his poſterity. But many chriſtians in early

Hevam, idque a tentatore data opera factum; quippe quam inſidioſo ſermone facilius deceptum iri, quam virum, crederet. Ut tamen non auſim inferiorem ingenio Hevam Adamo adfirmare, ita nec ſine aliqua cauſa, tentationis hanc circumſtantiam ſcriptis mandatam eſſe crediderim. Multa ſunt, in hiſce libris, ad mulierum caſtigandam ſuperbiam comparata, et ex hoc ipſo loco, ad mulierum viris conjunctarum, ſeu *uxorum* faſtum deprimendum argumentum ducit Paulus 1 Tim. ii. 14.

early times and ſince, have been of a different ſentiment. And ſuch eminent judicious ſcholars and exemplary chriſtians, as Le Clerc, Beauſobre and L'Enfant, and Mr. Archdeacon Paley in our own times, (c) after them;

(c) " In my opinion, the tranſaction in the wilderneſs above recited, Exodus xvi, was the firſt actual inſtitution of the ſabbath. For, if the ſabbath had been inſtituted at the time of the creation, as the words in *Geneſis* may ſeem at firſt ſight to import, and if it had been obſerved all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about two thouſand years, it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occaſion of even the obſcureſt alluſion to it, ſhould occur either in the general hiſtory of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and thoſe extreamly abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the three firſt Jewiſh patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is ſufficiently circumſtantial and domeſtic. Nor is there in the paſſage above quoted from the ſixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the ſabbath, then appointed to be obſerved, was only a revival of an ancient inſtitution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or ſuſpended; nor is any ſuch neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, laſtly, is any permiſſion recorded to diſpenſe with the inſtitution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.

The

them; have maintained, by ſuch evidence from the ſacred writings as is not eaſily to be ſet aſide, that though the ſeventh day is ſaid, Gen. ii. 3. to be *bleſſed by God and ſanctified*, immediately after the creation, the actual ſeparation and diſtinction of it from the other days of the week and religious obſer-

I 2

The paſſage in the ſecond chapter of Geneſis, which creates the whole controverſy upon the ſubject, is not inconſiſtent with this opinion; for as the ſeventh day was created into a ſabbath on account of God's reſting upon that day from the work of the creation, it was natural enough in the hiſtorian, when he had related the hiſtory of the creation, and of God's ceaſing from it on the ſeventh day, to add, "and God bleſſed the ſeventh day and ſanctified it, becauſe that on it he had reſted from all his work which God created and made," although the bleſſing and ſanctification, i. e. the religious diſtinction and appropriation of that day, was not actually made till many ages afterwards. The words do not aſſert, that God *then* "bleſſed" and "ſanctified" the ſeventh day, but that he bleſſed and ſanctified it *for that reaſon*; and if any aſk, why the ſabbath or ſanctification of the ſeventh day, was *then* mentioned, if it was not *then* appointed, the anſwer is at hand; the order of connection, and not of time, introduced the mention of the ſabbath, in the hiſtory of the ſubject which it was ordained to commemorate." Archdeacon Paley's Principles of moral and political philoſophy, p. 44, &c. Vol. ii. 8vo. See alſo Beauſobre et L'Enfant, Pref. Gen. ſur le N. T. p. cxxviii. to cxxiv.

obſervance of it, was not commanded, nor did take place, till the time of the departure of the Iſraelites out of Egypt. And if ſo, which I believe you will find to be a juſt ſtatement, Moſes ſpoke of the ſabbath in Geneſis, only by way of anticipation, and of his own accord, to give the greater dignity and ſolemnity to the obſervance of the inſtitution.

SECTION VII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *freedom in mentioning ſome defects in St.* Paul's *reaſoning; and in criticizing other parts of ſcripture, countenanced by other chriſtians of acknowleged eminence; by* Eraſmus, Caſtellio, Luther, Mr. Whiſton, Dr. Durell.

WHATEVER Dr. Prieſtley remarks concerning St. Paul's reaſoning, that it is not always concluſive, eſpecially in his applications of the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, it is by no means inconſiſtent with his holding him in general to be an excellent reaſoner, as well as an enlightened divine teacher,

teacher, and ardent unwearied propagator of the truth. If the Doctor be miſtaken in what he has aſſerted on this ſubject, let his errors be publiſhed, and he will be thankful to the hand that points them out. But let him not on ſuch accounts be traduced as an unbeliever and enemy to the goſpel, when if his obſervations be juſt, he is its trueſt friend *(d)*. For it looks better, and is

(d) Mr. Tucker, in his joco-ſerious viſion, where he is introduced to Locke, and Plato, brings in the latter paſſing ſeverer cenſures on the Cilician of Tarſus, as he ſtiles St. Paul, than any thing advanced by Dr. Prieſtley; after which, the father of the academy thus farther characteriſes him.

'He (Paul) then owned, that he had received heavenly 'gifts in earthly veſſels, and though the liquor was not at 'all impaired thereby in ſubſtance or virtue, it might get 'ſome twang of the veſſel. His education at the feet of 'Gamaliel led him, and the general taſte of his country-'men, obliged him, to deal in far-fetched extravagant 'figures, which, as that taſte ſubſided, loſt all reſemblance 'with the things ſignified, but *were underſtood literally, 'thereby leading men quite wide of his meaning*, involving 'them in uſeleſs ſubtilties, inextricable difficulties, and 'endleſs diſputes. If he had ſtaid among us, till my 'brother Locke here came up, he would certainly have 'been a great favourite with him. I am perſuaded he would 'have ſaid, nobody underſtood him ſo well ſince his own 'immediate ſcholars.' Vol. iv. 259. 260. A fine compliment, this laſt, to Mr. Locke.

more creditable for a believer in revelation to point out any defects in the ſacred writers, than to diſſemble, and leave them to be detected and boaſted of by its enemies; and neither the truth of the goſpel, nor the weight of Paul's teſtimony to it, are at all affected by his arguing ill on ſome abſtruſe incidental points introduced by him, in his epiſtles.

We find Eraſmus, in his day, condemned in the ſame way, for not reckoning St. Paul to be under a divine direction in every thing he wrote, and infallible. Eckius, the man who became Luther's adverſary ſoon after, in a letter to Eraſmus, in the year 1518, blames him likewiſe for having ſaid on Matthew ii. 'that the evangeliſt might cite 'ſome authorities from the Old Teſtament, 'by memory, and without conſulting the 'original; and that by truſting their me-'mories, they might, as often happens, fall 'into miſtakes.' And he is diſpleaſed with him, becauſe he had advanced on Acts x. 'that the apoſtles, in ſpeaking greek, mixed

'the

'the idioms of their native language with 'it; and that they learned greek not from 'Demoſthenes's *orations*, but from the po-'pular dialect.'

To this Eraſmus replied; 'that in cen-'ſuring the apoſtles for ſlips of memory, 'he had affirmed nothing of himſelf; but 'had only ſpoken after St. Jerom. And 'that it did not follow, that a perſon re-'jected the ſcriptures, becauſe he frankly 'confeſſed there were ſome conſiderable 'miſtakes in them; eſpecially, 'as it was a 'point by no means ſettled how far inſpi-'ration did extend.' Le Clerc, Biblio-theque choiſie, Tom. v. p. 233. 257.

Among many moſt learned, in the very learned times, at the beginning of the re-formation, in the foremoſt rank may be placed, Sebaſtian Chateillon, otherwiſe Caſ-tellio, or Caſtalio. To that great work he contributed by a tranſlation of the ſcriptures into the moſt claſſical latin, without loſing the ſenſe and ſtrength of the original, but the contrary: and into his mother tongue, the French, in a plain and homely ſtile. For both, he had to encounter with great obloquy,

quy, and oppoſition from his cotemporaries, and from others, ſince their time; but poſterity, though late, has rendered him juſtice, and his tranſlations now are much eſteemed. What adds to his character and worth is, that in the midſt of theſe labours, he was under many diſcouragements, and often depreſſed with penury. Whilſt he filled a ſchool at Geneva, to which Calvin had recomended him, he had ſome leſſer diſagreements with that reformer, through his free ſentiments concerning the ſong of Solomon, which he thought unworthy of a place in the bible; and alſo by his denying the article of Chriſt's deſcent into hell, to ſignify his going to the place of the damned. But *(e)* Calvin kept no bounds afterwards in

(e) To make amends for things leſs favourable, which truth has compelled to relate concerning this eminent reformer, I ſhall here preſent you with ſome maſterly ſtrokes of his character of a different complexion, together with a fine ſketch of Luther, as I find them, drawn together, by no vulgar hand; who in high party-times, ſhewed himſelf in his writings, a friend to his country, and to the civil and religious rights of men. He is ſpeaking of the wretched ſtate of things, when popery reigned triumphant in this weſtern world.

'Then, ſays he, was *ſchiſm* a thing unknown; Then 'no

in his calumnies, in which he was ſeconded by his pupil Beza, againſt a man, in learning and

'no ſooner was a *heretic* heard of, than he was delivered 'to *Satan*; and little quiet had he till *conveyed* to *him* in a '*fiery* chariot! Oh! *Luther! Luther!*

'But they ſay, thou would'ſt rail, would'ſt throw thy 'dirt about without diſtinction. But in this how far be- 'neath the good St. *Jerom!* Nor didſt thou treat our *Henry* 'with leſs politeneſs, than *Conſtantius* and *Julian* met with 'from *reputed ſaints*. In learning equal to that army of '*foul-mouthed* adverſaries that attacked thee. Acute to an 'uncommon degree. Of a blameleſs life, and for courage, '*compared with thee* Alexander *was a coward*. In all re- 'ſpects fitted waſt thou, for that great work providence 'deſigned thee. This ſacrament *(of the Lord's ſupper)* thou 'purgedſt from iniquity, but expreſſedſt thyſelf amiſs. But 'ſo long had the world been uſed to *adore* it, that it could 'not bear the *naked truth*.

'And *Calvin!* ſhall I paſs by thee without regard! Thy 'diction *attic*; elevated and juſt thy ſentiments; thy mo- 'rals pure. Learn'd, ingenious, penetrating, and of found 'judgment. Not acquainted with books alone, and theo- 'logical diſputes, but knowing men. Above the views 'of wealth. Reſolv'd, ſteady, indefatigable. Shewing 'what a genius and induſtry can do, in a few years, 'and in bad health. Oh! had *Servetus* lived! Not leſs 'thy blot, than *Uriah*'s wife to *David!* In the camp of '*Antichriſt*, let *D'Alva* wear the conſecrated ſword. Let '*Dominic* be ſainted. But let not *the true flock* of Chriſt pol- 'lute its hands in blood, for *uſeleſs notions*. Let vice be 'puniſhed, but let thought be free, *and have it's liberal* 'courſe!'—The Sacrament a plain and rational inſtitution, &c. by Edward Lewis, M. A. Rector of Waterſtock and Emington, in Oxfordſhire, p. 82. 83. 1751.

and genius their equal at leaſt, in ſelf-government and the cultivation of the mild, benevolent ſpirit of the goſpel, leaving them both far out of ſight. Caſtellio's great crime was, his oppoſition in converſation, as well as from the preſs, to their intolerant principles, and favourite doctrine of predeſtination, and of puniſhing heretics by the civil power, i. e. by burning them alive. The mean part which Calvin took in entrapping the unfortunate Servetus, and afterwards in procuring his condemnation, which ended by his being burn'd at a ſtake, by the magiſtrates of Geneva, will be a ſtain on his memory, never to be effaced.

But what leads me to mention Caſtellio here, is a ſhort latin MS, part of a larger work, compoſed the year in which he died, preſerved by Wetſtein at the end of the ſecond volume of his New Teſtament. If he had never written any thing more, this would have diſcovered his liberal mind, and uncommon penetration, and inſight into the true meaning of the ſacred writings. His admirable remark on the diſtinction which is to be made, in the things, which are the

ſubject

ſubject matter of the New Teſtament, furniſhes a full juſtification of what Dr. Prieſtley, and others, have advanced, relating to the partial inſpiration of the ſacred writers, and is a ſufficient apology for any faults, miſtakes, diſagreements, or defective reaſonings, which may happen to be found in them. I ſhall give an engliſh verſion of this precious rellique, putting the original in the margin, that you may the better form your judgment of both. He had generally a flowing elegant latin pen, though here he ſeems to have attended leſs to the ſtile than the ſenſe, being ſtudious to make that perſpicuous and ſtrong.

Wetſtein tells us, that Caſtellio's title of the work, was *De arte dubitandi et confitendi, ignorandi et ſciendi*; *i. e.* of the art of doubting and of being aſſured, the art of ignorance and knowlege. The title itſelf has more in it to be learned, than you find in many large books. For it is no ordinary attainment, to know, when to doubt, and when to be aſſured; and when to be ignorant. The greater part never own their doubting, or being ignorant of any thing.

Cœptum

Cæptum ineunte anno 1563.

LIB. I. CAP. XII.

QUOD attinet ad diſcordiam, aut etiam repugnantiam, quæ videtur eſſe, ſacrarum literarum, ſciendum eſt, eam diſcordiam aut verborum eſſe, aut rerum; ac de verbis primum dicemus. Verborum diſcordia aut librariorum eſt aut authorum, &c.

CAP. XIV.

SED in rerum diſcrepantia major exiſtit difficultas, et de qua alioquin tacere quam loqui mallem, ad vitandam vel infirmiorum offenſionem, vel iniquiorum invidiam, quæ in hoc argumento vix ac ne vix quidem videtur poſſe evitari; verum quia ſine hujus explicatione inſtituto meo ſatisfacere, et latentem in rebus, ad conſcientiarum tranquillitatem neceſſariis, veritatem eruere non poſſum, audendum eſt. Interea ab infirmioribus peto, ut rem ſæpius perpendant antequam judicent; multa

Begun at the commencement of the year 1563.

BOOK I. CHAP. XII.

WITH reſpect to any ſeeming diſagreement, or even contradiction, in the ſacred writings, it is to be noted, that it muſt either be, in words or in things. Diſagreement in words, is either the fault of the tranſcribers, or from the authors themſelves, &c. (Here I omit ſome juſt and moſt ingenious remarks, haſtening to what is ſtill of more importance.)

CHAP. XIV.

BUT the greateſt difficulty is, where the diſagreement is in things themſelves. Concerning which, to avoid giving offence to the weak, and exciting the ill will of others who are leſs candid, I ſhould be inclined to ſay nothing at all. Yet I muſt take courage and make the attempt, ſince otherwiſe I cannot execute my deſign, and draw out to light the truth in ſuch points as are neceſſary for the quiet of men's conſciences. In the mean while, I intreat it as a favour of my weaker brethren, that they weigh the matter well, before they finally decide upon it: for

many

multa enim prima fronte, quia nova ſunt, diſplicent, quæ poſtea diligentius conſiderata placent et probantur.

Igitur primum omnium illud ſciednum eſt, in ſacris literis quatuor eſſe orationis genera, de quibus, quia loquitur obiter Paulus, ejus verba in 1 Cor. xiv. hic ſubjiciam: ‘alioquin ‘fratres, inquit, ſi ego vos alienis linguis al- ‘locutum veniam, quid vobis prodero, niſi ‘inſit in oratione mea patefactio, aut cognitio, ‘aut vaticinatio, aut doctrina?’ *Patefactionem* appellat, ſi quid homini divinitus patefactum eſt. *Vaticinatio* eſt alioquin eadem cum patefactione, niſi quod conjuncta eſt cum mentis agitatione atque permotione. *Cognitionem* interpretor eam, quæ ex viſis aut auditis efflorescit. *Doctrinam* appellari a Paulo arbitror eam, quam homini literæ et ratio conferunt. Hanc illic eſſe mentem Pauli, nemo, opinor, negabit: certe etiamſi illa nec Paulus nec quiſquam alius dixiſſet, res ipſa per ſe vera eſt, videlicet hæc orationis quatuor eſſe genera

many things, which we are prejudiced againſt at firſt on account of their novelty, gain our approbation and pleaſe us, after more mature conſideration.

Firſt then it is to be attended to, that, in the ſacred writings, there are four ſorts of ſubjects of diſcourſe. And as Paul incidentally mentions them in one place, I ſhall quote them, 1 *Cor. xiv.* 6. Now, brethren, if I come unto you ſpeaking in foreign languages, what ſhall I profit you, unleſs I ſpeak by revelation, or by knowlege, or by prophecying, or by doctrine.

Revelation, *the apoſtle calls, what is made known in an extraordinary manner by almighty God.*

Prophecying *is the ſame, only received ſomewhat differently.*

By knowledge, *I underſtand what grows out of what we ſee and hear.*

Doctrine, *I call that which we gather from learning, and our reaſoning faculties.*

This, I apprehend, no one will deny to be Paul's real meaning. Indeed, if neither Paul, nor any one elſe had ſaid it, the thing would in itſelf be true, that theſe are the four ſubjects

of

genera ſacrorum ſcriptorum; ſic enim ſcripſerunt, ut alioqui loqui inter ſeſe de rebus divinis ſoliti erant, neque enim alia mens aut ſcientia aut ſpiritus erat ſcribentium quam loquentium, nec aliud ſunt ipſorum ſcripta, quam ipſorum cum abſentibus aut poſteris colloquia. Id quod planum facere facile eſſet. Nam patefactionis exemplum eſt in Paulo, qui ſe evangelium non ab ullo homine, ſed Jeſu Chriſto patefaciente didiciſſe dicit, *Galat.* i. Vaticinationis in Agabo in *Actis*; ſed ea quidem, quatenus mentis habet agitationem, ad inſtitutum noſtrum non pertinet, ſiquidem illa mentis agitatio, et, ut vocatur, vatum bacchatio, non literarum, ſed actionis et geſtus eſt, qui in ſcriptis cerni non poſſunt. Cognitionis exemplum eſt in Lucæ et Joannis hiſtoriis, qui narrant, hic quæ ipſe vidit et nonnulla ex parte geſſit, ille quæ ex viris fide dignis cognovit. Doctrinæ exemplum eſt in Pauli ad Galatas diſputatione de

legis

of diſcourſe in the ſacred writers. For they wrote concerning divine things, exactly in the ſame way as they were wont to talk about them with one another; and whether they wrote or ſpake, their mind and knowlege and divine inſpiration were the ſame; nor are their writings any thing elſe but their converſation with abſent chriſtian friends, or with poſterity.

This matter may be eaſily explained. For Paul gives us an example, what revelation *is, in himſelf, where he ſays, Gal. i.* 11, 12, "I certify you, brethren, that the goſpel 'which was preached by me, is not after 'man. For I neither received it of man, 'neither was I taught it, but by the revela-'tion of Jeſus Chriſt.'

What Agabus, Acts xxi. 10, 11. *ſaid of Paul's bonds and impriſonment, is an inſtance of* prophecy.

The hiſtories of John, and Luke, are ſpecimens of what the apoſtle calls knowlege; *the former relates what he ſaw, and wherein he was in part an actor himſelf; Luke, what he learned from credible witneſſes.*

What the apoſtle would have us to underſtand by doctrine, *is exemplified in the diſqui-*

legis operibus et fidei juſtificatione, in qua ſacrarum literarum auctoritate rationibuſque nititur. Quæ cum ita ſint, nobis ita verſandum eſt in ſacris auctoribus, ut hæc tria, videlicet patefactionem, cognitionem et doctrinam non confundamus; ſed quæ patefactione tradita ſunt, ea pro oraculis: quæ cognitione, pro teſtimoniis: quæ doctrina, pro hominum ſententiis habeamus. Ita fiet ut tantum cuique rei, quantum ipſius natura poſtulat, tribuentes, eas perturbationes evitemus, quæ ex hujuſce diſtinctionis ignoratione naſcentes, non niſi eadem cognita et admiſſa tolli poſſunt.

Igitur ſi quæ occurrunt in ſacris literis vel diſcrepantiæ vel repugnantiæ, diligenter conſiderandum erit, utrum eæ ſunt in oraculis, an in teſtimoniis, an in hominum ſententiis: nam ſi erunt in oraculis, oportebit

ſitions concerning the works of the *law, and* juſtification by faith, *in his epiſtle to the Galatians; where he makes uſe of reaſoning and arguments drawn from the authority of the hebrew ſcriptures.*

Now ſince this is the true ſtate of facts, we muſt be careful in reading the ſacred writers, that we do not create confuſion and miſtake by blending theſe three things together, revelation, knowlege, and doctrine, and by arguing upon them as the ſame; but keeping them diſtinct, to look upon what comes by revelation, as the oracles of God; what knowlege of facts we have, to conſider as received by credible teſtimony; and what is delivered as doctrine, to eſteem only as the opinions of men. By this ſeparate conſideration and diſtinguiſhing of each ſubject, we ſhall ſteer clear from that confuſion and error, which will otherwiſe be unavoidable.

If therefore we meet with any diſagreement or contradiction in the ſacred writings, we muſt carefully obſerve, whether it be in the oracles, i. e. *the word of God, or in the teſtimonies to it, or the opinions of men about it. For if it be in the word of God itſelf, we*

tebit circumſtantias omnes et locorum, et temporum, et perſonarum, et occaſionum atque cauſarum ſedulo perpendere, ut in ea, quæ videbatur, diſcordia, concordiam inveniamus: quod ſi ne ſic quidem invenerimus, tribuendum id erit ignorantiæ noſtræ, et credendum aliquid ibi eſſe nobis ignotum, quod ſi perciperemus ſummam ibi concordiam eſſe videremus: nam ſpiritus veritatis, qui oraculorum iſtorum author eſt, non pugnat ipſe ſecum; nec in eum vel oblivio, vel error, vel ignorantia ulla cadit. Sin erunt in teſtimoniis, non oportebit nos nimis eſſe ſuperſtitioſos neque ſingula verba curioſius obſervare atque inter ſeſe componere, ſed ea concordia, quæ eſt in ſumma rei, contentos eſſe; nam ſi duorum aut trium teſtimonio credi leges tum profanæ tum ſacræ recte jubent, cum tamen ejuſmodi teſtimonia raro (præſertim ſi de re ſunt paulo vel prolixiore vel implicatiore) in ſingulis verbis concordent, etiamſi teſtes ſunt alioqui viri probi et veraces: debemus in ſacrorum authorum teſtimoniis illam legem vel prudentiam vel æquitatem ſine moroſi-

tate

muſt diligently weigh and conſider all the circumſtances of place, time, perſons, occaſions, reaſons for delivering it, till we find a real harmony, where we thought the diſagreement lay. But if we cannot by theſe means diſcover it, we muſt believe that there is ſome point of which we are ignorant, which if we could ſee, all would be in perfect agreement. For the ſpirit of truth, God himſelf, who is the author of this word, cannot contradict himſelf, nor can forgetfulneſs, or error, or ignorance belong to him.

But if the diſagreement be in the teſtimonies to the facts of the New Teſtament, we are not to be too ſuperſtitious, nor over minute and ſcrupulous in marking and comparing each word, but to content ourſelves with a general agreement upon the main points. For if laws both human and divine, direct us, very properly, to give credit to two or three witneſſes, although ſuch witneſſes, otherwiſe very upright and honeſt men, ſeldom agree in every word, eſpecially if it be in a matter of any length or obſcurity; we ought ſurely to obſerve the ſame rule, and be governed by the like prudence and equity, without any troubleſome nicety

tate imitari, alioquin noſtra moroſitate nihil aliud conſequemur, quam quod aut nulli auctores, ſive ſacri, ſive profani, nobis ſatisfacient, aut eas minutias conciliare conantes quæ conciliari nequeunt, ineptos nos ne dicam ridiculos præbeamus. Ac quod dixi de teſtimoniis, idem dico de hominum ſententiis, videlicet tantum eis tribuendum eſſe, quantum ſanctorum hominum dictis tribui debet, vel quantum ipſimet ſibi tribuunt; non tamen ut eodem cum oraculis loco habeamus, cum ne ipſi quidem hoc a nobis poſtulent.

CAP. XV.

NON dubito quin hoc loco nonnulli offendantur. Clamabunt eſſe blaſphemiam: ſacras enim literas eſſe divino afflatu conſcriptas, neque hominum, ſed dei arbitrio editas: quarum, ſi vel unum verbum in dubium vocetur, periculum

or exactneſs, in weighing and reconciling the teſtimonies of the ſacred writers. For we ſhall gain nothing elſe by our ſcrupuloſity, but ſuch a degree of ſcepticiſm, that no teſtimony of authors, profane or ſacred, will ſatisfy us; or ſhall make ourſelves perfectly ridiculous, by endeavouring to reconcile trifling differences, which never can nor need to be adjuſted.

And this that I have remarked concerning teſtimony, is to be extended to opinions of their own, delivered by the ſacred writers. We are to pay as much deference to them as is due to holy and good men, or as much as they themſelves require of us: but not to erect them into oracles, or place their word upon a level with the word of God, when they themſelves are far from demanding any ſuch thing from us.

CHAP. XV.

I HAVE no doubt but ſome will here be offended, and cry out, that I ſpeak blaſphemy; alleging that the ſcriptures were written by divine inſpiration; and publiſhed, not by the will of men, but of God; and that if but one

periculum ſit ne cadat earum auctoritas. A quibus ego poſtulo, ne ante de dictis meis judicent, quam ea rite et diligenter perpenderint. Ego ſacris literis non minus tribuo, quam quiſquam alius, et ſecundum earum doctrinam et vivo hactenus, et, ut ſpero ad finem uſque vivam; ac deum precor, ut potius me ex hac vita tollat, quam ut a tam ſancta et divina doctrina vivum deflectere patiatur; ſed quorundam ſuperſtitioni, hominum alioquin, ut ego exiſtimo, non improborum, obviam eundum puto, qui dum ſic ſingula verba, ubi nihil neceſſe eſt mordicus urgent, perturbant imprudenter eccleſiam opinionum diſſenſionibus, quæ qua alia via componi poſſint, nondum videre quivi; et tentatæ ſunt, idque jam diu, et a multis, multæ viæ: ego vero ſententiam meam, et rationibus, et ipſarum, de quibus agimus, ſacrarum literarum auctoritate, planam, ut ſpero, faciam. Deinde ſi quid in ea eſt incommodi, conferam, cum diſſentientis ſententiæ incommodis, quæ ſi majora eſſe evicero,

word in them be called in queſtion, there will be a danger of the authority of the whole coming to nothing.

All I aſk of theſe perſons, is, not to decide upon what I ſay, before they have rightly and attentively conſidered it. I have as much reverence for, and attribute as much to the ſcriptures, as any one; and have lived all my life, and hope to live to the end of it, in conformity to what they teach me; and I pray God ſooner to take me out of the world, than ſuffer me to turn aſide from ſo holy and divine an inſtitution. But I hold it right to oppoſe the ſuperſtition of ſome well-meaning perſons, as I eſteem them, who, by obſtinately dwelling on every word, imprudently diſturb the chriſtian church with continual diſſentions, which I know not any other way than this, of compoſing, though many have long been tried, and by different perſons. I have however a good hope of recommending my own method, by the reaſons with which I ſhall ſupport it, and the authority of the ſcriptures, which are the point in queſtion. After this, I ſhall contraſt the inconveniencies, if any there be, which may attend it, with thoſe of the oppoſite ſentiment;

evicero, poſtulabo ut ea ſententia, quæ et vera eſt, et minus habet incommodi, non repudietur; quod ſi impetravero, viam ut ſpero habebimus ad dirimendas graves et pernicioſas controverſias.

Ac primum quod ad rationem attinet, illud mihi negabit nemo, ſolere legatos, quæ a principe mandata acceperunt, ea ut principis mandata exponere, quæ in dubium vocare non liceat: quæ vero ipſi ſua ſponte dicunt, ea ipſos (ſi boni fidique ſunt legati) non principi ſed ſibi adſcribere, nec eandem his quam illis auctoritatem poſcere; deinde illud conſtare debet, Chriſtum ea hominibus conferre ſolitum bona, non quæ jam a natura haberent ipſi, ſed quibus carerent; quod ſi quod jam habebant a natura bonum, etiamſi id eſſet non undequaque perfectum, tamen quia ejus uſus eis commode conſtabat, id ipſe nec novum conferebat, nec melius aut perfectius reddebat: itaque ſi quando claudum ſanabat, tantum claudi-

tatem

timent; and if theſe laſt ſhall be proved to be much more weighty and conſiderable, all I deſire is, that the opinion, which is true, and accompanied with the feweſt difficulties, may not be rejected: and if I can carry this point, I truſt we ſhall diſcover a way to put an end to many conſiderable and pernicious diſputes.

And firſt with reſpect to the reaſons, upon which it is founded, this point will be readily granted me, that ambaſſadors, who have received any commands from their prince, always lay them down in ſuch a manner, that no one can diſpute about them: but, if they be true and truſty men, what they deliver of their own accord, they will be cautious to aſcribe to themſelves and not to the prince, and not to require the ſame ſubmiſſion to be paid to it.

In the next place, we may be aſſured, that Chriſt did not beſtow thoſe benefits and qualities upon men which they naturally poſſeſſed, but which they were in want of. Therefore if they had any natural talent, though it might not be altogether perfect, yet becauſe it might ſerve them very well, he did not give them a a new one, or alter that which they had for the better. If, for example, he healed a lame man,

tatem ſanabat; linguam quidem aut aures aut oculos aut os claudi nec ſanabat, quippe ſani; nec corrigebat aut perfectiora reddebat, quippe quibus jam alioquin uti poterant, quod idem et de cæteris dictum volo. Quod ſi in corpore id faciebat, idem in animo quoque eum facere, ut mihi concedatur, poſtulo, cum ſit in animo eadem et cauſa et ratio quæ in corpore. Ipſemet pronunciavit, ſanos non egere medico ſed ægrotos; id quod de animorum morbis dixit, in quibus idem, quod in corporum morbis factitabat. Quare ſic ſtatuamus, Chriſtum ea homini conferre, quibus homo caret: quæ vero alioquin habet homo, non item. Igitur ut hæc duo, quæ videlicet tum de legatis, tum de morborum ſanationibus dixi, ad inſtitutum noſtrum accomodentur, hæc dico: Erant apoſtoli, (ut ab his potiſſimum exemplum ducamus,) Chriſti legati, a quo quæ mandata acceperant, ea ut Chriſti mandata atque oracula bene et fideliter, (quippe ſancti juſtique viri) vel iis qui ipſos præſentes

man, he only cured his lameneſs; his tongue, ears, eyes, and mouth, he left as they were, as being already in a ſound ſtate; nor did he make any change or improvement in them, as they very ſufficiently anſwered their purpoſe. The ſame remark I would make in every other inſtance. I require alſo that it may be conceded to me, that he proceeded in the ſame way, in healing mens' minds, as their bodies, ſince the caſes are exactly parallel. He himſelf declared ( ) thoſe that are well need not a phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick. This he ſpoke of the diſeaſes of the mind, in which he uſed the like proceſs as in thoſe of the body. It is therefore a ſettled point, that Chriſt conferred on the man, what the man wanted; but what the man already otherwiſe poſſeſſed, he meddled not with.

To apply therefore to our purpoſe, what I have here noted concerning the office of ambaſſadors, and of the healing of diſeaſes. The apoſtles, (that I may particularly exemplify the ſubject in them) were the ambaſſadors of Chriſt. What commands they received from him, as they were holy and righteous men, they would deliver truly and faithfully, as his commands

and

præſentes audiebant, verbis, vel abſentibus, et porro nobis, ſcriptis expoſuerunt: ac de iis dubitare non licet. Sin aliquid non a Chriſto mandatum, ſed ipſi ſua ſponte dicebant, id non Chriſti, aut ſpiritui ſancti, ſed ſibi adſcribebant.

Jam cum Chriſtus eorum opera uſus fuerit, non dubium eſt quin eos inſtruxerit rebus ad id munus neceſſariis; ſed ſic inſtruxerit, ut ſi quid alioquin habebant, id non dederit. Exempli gratia, erat eis ad loquendum opus lingua: eam nemini eorum dedit, quippe jam haberent; erat opus auribus ad auditorum verba audienda: nec eas quidem dedit; erat et pedibus opus ad iter, neque eos dedit: denique nihil eis dedit, quod jam haberent. At peregrinarum linguarum ſcientiam, quâ et opus erat ad docendos populos, et ipſi carebant, dedit; et miraculorum poteſtatem contulit, et eis ad percipienda oracula mentem aperuit; denique omnia illis ad munus iſtud neceſſaria, quibus alioquin carebant, contulit.

Jam

and divine oracles, either in words to t[illegible] that were their hearers, or in writing, to t[illegible] that were abſent; and ſo to us. Concerning theſe things we can have no doubt. But what they had not received from Chriſt, but ſpoke of their own motion, this they did not aſcribe to Chriſt, or to the holy ſpirit, but to themſelves.

As Chriſt moreover was to make uſe of their miniſtry, there can be no queſtion, but that he furniſhed them with every thing neceſſary for their office: but then, not ſo as to ſupply them with what they already otherwiſe enjoyed. For inſtance: it was neceſſary for them to have a tongue to ſpeak with: this he gave to none of them, becauſe they already had it. The like may be ſaid of ears, and feet, and ſo on. In a word, he gave them nothing of what they already had. But as the knowlege of foreign languages was neceſſary to teach other nations, and they were without it, he beſtowed it upon them: he gave them alſo a power of working miracles, and opened their minds to underſtand the word of God; in ſhort, conferred upon them every thing they ſtood in need of, to diſcharge and fulfil their office and truſt.

Again,

[redacted] cum et memoriæ et intellectus vim a [redacted]tura haberent, ſi quæ erant vel memoriæ vel intellectus ope ſcribenda, Chriſtus eis ad illa ſcribenda memoriam aut intellectum non dabat, non magis profecto quam oculos aut manus aut chartam aut atramentum, quippe cum omnia illa jam haberent: ſed ipſi ſua memoria ſuoque ingenio illa ſcribebant. Quod ſi cujus eorum memoria vel ingenium erat infirmius, ei poterat in ſcribendo idem accidere, quod in loquendo, et quod cæteris bonis viris interdum accidit; videlicet ut ei dictum aliquod excideret infirmioris vel memoriæ vel judicii. Scripſiſſe autem eos non omnia patefaciente ſpiritu ſancto, ſed quædam ope memoriæ, alia ingenii, patet ex eorum ſcriptis. Nam quod ad memoriam attinet, didicerunt evangeliſtæ evangelium non patefactione, ut Paulus, ſed vel quia ipſi adfuerunt, ut Matthæus et Joannes, vel ex iis, qui adfuerant,

cog-

Again. As they had from nature recei[illegible] the powers of memory, and underſtandi[illegible] in thoſe things that were to be written down by the help of memory and underſtanding, Chriſt did not give them a memory and underſtanding to write them, any more than he gave them eyes, and hands, and paper, and ink, becauſe they already had all theſe things: but they they compoſed their writings from their own memories and abilities. And if it was ſo, that any one of them had not a very ſtrong memory, or ſlower parts, the ſame might befall him in writing, as in ſpeaking, and what ſometimes happens to men in other reſpects moſt worthy; namely, *to make a ſlight ſlip, or forget ſomething, through defect of memory or judgment. And that they did not indite every thing by inſpiration; but ſome things by memory, and from their own underſtandings, is apparent from their writings.*

With reſpect to their making uſe of their own memories, it is obſervable, that all the four evangeliſts learned the goſpel, not from revelation, as did Paul; but either from what they ſaw and heard themſelves, as was true of Matthew, and John; or they had their in-

noverunt, ut Marcus et Lucas; id quod ipſimet teſtantur, ſiquidem Joannes in evangelio teſtatur ſe viſa teſtari, cap. xix. et xxi. Et idem in 1 epiſtolæ ſuæ initio tradit ſe, quod et oculis viderit, et auribus audiverit, et manibus pulpaverit, id teſtari; ex quo apparet, eum dicere teſtimonium, ad quod dicendum nihil ei, ſicuti Paulo, opus erat patefactione. Lucas quoque teſtatur ſe ex aliis audita ſcribere, id quod profecto non dixiſſet, ſi evangelium, ſicuti Paulus, patefactione cognoviſſet; quod idem et de cæteris duobus, ſcilicet Matthæo et Marco, cenſendum eſt. Item quod ad ingenium attinet, ſcribit diſerte Paulus 1 Cor. viii. 'Conjugibus præcipio, non ego, ſed dominus,' &c. et mox: 'cæteris ego dico, non dominus;' et paulo poſt, 'de virginibus

formation from thoſe who were preſent to the tranſactions, which was the caſe of Mark and Luke. This we gather from themſelves. For John in his goſpel tells us, that he bore teſtimony to what he himſelf ſaw, xix. 35. xxi. 24. *In the beginning likewiſe of his firſt epiſtle he mentions, that he bore witneſs to what he had* heard, *and* ſeen *and* looked upon *and* handled. *Hence it appears, that he did not need any revelation, as Paul did, to bring him acquainted with the goſpel, and to enable him to make credible report of it to others. Luke alſo,* i. 2, 3, *tells us, that he wrote from the information of thoſe, who were eye-witneſſes; which he would not have ſaid, if he had received the knowlege of the goſpel, as Paul, by revelation: and the ſame judgment we are to form of Matthew, and Mark, though they themſelves ſay nothing on the ſubject.*

Alſo with regard to the ſacred writers recording ſome things merely from the fund of their own underſtandings and good ſenſe, Paul ſays expreſsly, 1 *Cor.* vii. 10. 12. 25. Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, &c. But to the reſt ſpeak I, not the Lord. Now concerning virgins, I have

bus autem domini præceptum non habeo, ſed conſilium do, ut qui is ſim, cui domini clementia fidentem eſſe datum eſt.' Hic certo palam oſtendit, non omnia ſe ex domini præcepto ſcribere, ſed in nonnullis ſuam ſententiam dicere.

CAP. XVI.

NUNC dicenda ſunt quæ contra adduci poſſunt incommoda. Dicet enim aliquis, periculum eſſe ne hac ratione detrahatur auctoritas ſacris literis, neve eis minus fides habeatur. Ad quod ego reſpondeo: etiamſi ita eſſet, non idcirco non eſſe vera, quæ dixi; aut ſi quis falſa putet, refellat: quod ſi vera ſunt, ut certe ſunt, eis locus dari debet, præſertim propter ea quæ loco ſuo dicentur. Nunc non ita eſt, meo quidem judicio; non enim ſita eſt ſacrorum ſcriptorum auctoritas in

no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be found faithful. *Here he in the moſt open manner ſhews, that he did not write every thing according to the commandment of the Lord, but in ſome things delivered only his own opinion.*

CHAP. XVI.

I am now to ſpeak of the diſadvantages, which reſult from this method of interpreting the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament. For ſome will ſay, that there is a danger hence to be apprehended, that the authority of the ſacred writings will be diminiſhed, and leſs credit be paid to them. To this I reply, that if it were ſo, what I have advanced would not be the leſs true; or if any one thinks it to be otherwiſe, let him confute it. But if it be true, as it certainly is, it ought to be received, eſpecially on account of what I ſhall mention in its proper place.

But indeed, in my opinion, no ſuch conſequences would follow. For the authority of the ſacred writings depends not on a nice ad-

in paucis quibuſdam locis ſcrupuloſius ad calculos revocandis, ſed in ipſius doctrinæ tenore atque corpore, quemadmodum ſupra demonſtravimus. Itaque quemadmodum legati authoritas ſarta tecta manet, etiamſi dicas, eum interdum quædam dicere non juſſu principis; ita et ſacrorum ſcriptorum authoritas nihil diminuitur, ſi de eis idem dicas, quod de ſe ipſo dicere Paulum paulo ante demonſtravimus. Et vero cur illis plus tribuamus, quam ipſimet ſibi, nullam cauſam video; quin id ſine vitio fieri non poſſe puto. Ipſe Paulus quantum ſibi et cæteris tribuendum ſit, non obſcure docet, dum ad Corinthios ita loquitur 1 Cor. iv. 'Sic de nobis exiſtiment homines ut de Chriſti miniſtris et divinorum arcanorum diſpenſatoribus." Hoc qui tribuit illis, ſatis tribuit, etiamſi illorum ſingula verba non ad vivum reſecet.

Equidem quid aliis accidat neſcio; ego hac ſententia tanto magis in eorum authoritate acquieſco atque confirmor, dum eos video ita rei et hominum ſaluti fuiſſe intentos,

ut

juſtment of a few particular paſſages, but on the tenor and ſubſtance of the whole doctrine, as I have demonſtrated above. Therefore as the authority of an ambaſſador remains unblemiſhed, though he may ſometimes ſay things, for which he has not his prince's order: ſo would not the authority of ſcripture ſuffer, if you ſay of it, what I have juſt now ſhewn the apoſtle to ſpeak concerning himſelf. And why we ſhould attribute more to the ſcriptures, than Paul attributes to himſelf, I ſee no reaſon, but much in it to blame. Paul himſelf ſhews pretty plainly, in what eſtimation he would wiſh himſelf, and his fellow-apoſtles to be held, 1 Cor. iv. 1. *where he ſays,* Let a man ſo account of us, as of the miniſters of Chriſt, and ſtewards of the myſteries of God. *He that conſiders them in this light, does enough, though he does not diſſect every word to a nicety, and find out its meaning.*

How others may feel upon the ſubject, I know not. For my own part, I declare, that I am hereby more confirmed, and more gladly acquieſce, in the authority of the ſacred writers, when I ſee them ſo intent upon their meſſage and the ſalvation of men, as not to be very

ut verborum non uſque adeo magnam habuerint rationem: quæ res illorum teſtimonia tanto oſtendit eſſe veriora; qui enim ſibi ſunt veritatis conſcii, ii de verbis minus laborant: qui vero mentiuntur, illi ſummam adhibere ſolent diligentiam, ut orationis artificio et conſenſu mendacium occultent.

Sed dicet rurſus aliquis: at Petrus docet non hominis voluntate editum unquam fuiſſe oraculum, ſed ſpiritus ſancti impulſu locutos fuiſſe vates, 2 Pet. i. Item Paulus, 2 Tim. iii. 'Omne ſcriptum eſſe divinitus 'inſpiratum.' Ad quod ego reſpondeo de oraculis illa dici, ſicut ipſimet teſtantur: ſed non ideo tolli illam, quam ſupra ex ipſomet Paulo citavi, diſtinctionem oraculorum

ſollicitous about the language, in which they expreſs and convey it. And aſſuredly this ſtill gives greater credibility to their teſtimony. For they who are conſcious that they deliver nothing but the truth, are not anxious about the words they uſe. But they who deal in falſehood, ſtretch every nerve to cover their deceit, by the elaborate compoſition of their own narrative, and its moſt exact agreement in every part.

But it will farther perhaps be objected: Does not the apoſtle Peter ſay, that prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the holy ſpirit. 2 *Pet. i.* 21? *And Paul,* 2 *Tim. iii.* 16. All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God. *To which I anſwer; that it does not therefore follow, that every thing in the ſcriptures is inſpired: for this is ſpoken by the apoſtle, concerning the divine oracles, i. e. ſuch things as came by revelation: but this does not invalidate or take away the difference and diſtinction that is to be obſerved in the ſubjects recorded in the New Teſtament, which I have cited above from St. Paul; ſome of which are undoubtedly inſpired or received by revelation, but others are only teſtimonies*

rum et teſtimoniorum, et humanarum ſententiarum. * * * * * * * * *

Ita enim comparatum eſt ut, quæ hactenus hominibus incognita fuerunt, ea principio ægre admittantur, quamvis ſint veriſſima; nam adſueti homines veteri vino, quemadmodum docet Chriſtus, novum non protinus probant, magiſque vetere delectantur. Sed audendum aliquid eſt, modo verum, ſi juvare homines volumus; alioquin ſi eandem cum iis, qui nihil hominibus profuerunt, rationem perpetuo ſequemur, hominibus non magis quam illi proderimus; fit enim hic quod in morbis, ut ſi majorum remedia fruſtra fuerunt, alia tentanda ſint, aut de ſanatione deſperandum; fecit hoc noſtro tempore medicorum induſtria, qui, cum majores morbum neapolitanum ſanare nequiviſſent, nova remedia, idque alia ſuper alia excogitârunt, donec tandem ejus ſanandi rationem invenerunt. Vidit hoc Iſocrates quoque, qui in Evagora eos reprehendens, qui conſueta mala inſuetis bonis anteponunt, dicit

monies to the facts of the goſpel, or human reaſonings about them. * * * * * * * *

So it is, that men with difficulty admit at firſt, what they have been ignorant of, however moſt true it be. For as Chriſt ſays, thoſe that are uſed to old wine, do not immediately take to the new, though it be better. But we muſt not be diſcouraged in our attempts, when perſuaded of the truth of what we have to offer, if we would in earneſt ſerve mankind. Otherwiſe, if we go on in the ſame track with thoſe who have never benefited the world, we ſhall like them be wholly uſeleſs. For the caſe is the ſame here, as in the diſeaſes of men's bodies. If the remedies found out by our anceſtors, are inefficacious, we muſt try others, or deſpair of doing any good. This has actually been accompliſhed by the labours of phyſicians, in our own days; who, when thoſe that had gone before them, could not heal the neapolitan diſeaſe, invented new remedies, one after another, till at length they diſcovered a method of cure. Iſocrates alſo ſaw this, who in his Evagoras, blaming thoſe, who preferred ills to which they had been accuſtomed, to untried good, delivers this ſentiment: Thus we ſee,

that

dicit hanc ſententiam; *Videmus tum artium, tum cæterorum omnium incrementa fieri non per eos, qui uſitatis contenti ſunt, ſed per eos, qui, ſi quid perperam comparatum eſt, corrigere ac mutare audent.*

that improvements in arts, as well as in every thing elſe, are not made by thoſe, who are content with what they have been accuſtomed to; but by thoſe, who have the courage to attempt to correct and amend whatever they ſee amiſs and wrong.

For brevity ſake, I have omitted above, what the author had remarked concerning the great diſadvantages which flow from the contrary opinion and method of conſidering the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament as alike inſpired throughout, and from overlooking his diſtinction of the different nature and importance of the ſubjects treated of in the ſcriptures, which he ſupports with ſuch ſolid reaſon.

The concluſion of the whole you will eſteem a noble plea for free inquiry into the ſcriptures, and an honourable juſtification of Dr. Prieſtley, in regard to many reflections, which Dr. Horne in your names caſts upon him.

A very

A very learned friend, who has lately been reading the third edition of Michaelis's *Enleƈtung*, or introductory lectures to the New Teſtament, printed at Gottingen in 1777, and much altered, improved, and enlarged from the firſt edition, informs me, that this german writer therein expreſſes his doubts of the authenticity of the *Revelation of St. John*; but what is very remarkable, and which is indeed my only reaſon for mentioning this circumſtance, is; that Michaelis informs his readers, that Luther had alſo his doubts concerning it; and proves it by quotations from two prefaces, annexed to early editions of Luther's german bible; which have been ſince ſuppreſſed. So that others have been as free in their criticiſms on ſcripture, as Dr. Prieſtley.

To ſay nothing of Mr. *Whiſton*'s frequent declarations againſt retaining the ſong of Solomon, as a part of our ſacred writings, Dr. *Durell*, late Principal of Hertford college, whom I have cited above, thus freely expreſſes himſelf about it.

'This

'This poem is generally conſidered as an 'epithalamium compoſed by Solomon on his 'marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh, 'the king of Egypt. And this appears to 'me the only point of view in which it 'ought to be conſidered. In reſpect to the 'myſtical ſenſe which it is ſuppoſed to 'contain, I muſt frankly acknowlege, that 'I cannot perceive the leaſt foundation for 'it. This notion, I ſuppoſe, was originally 'derived from the *Targum*, and adopted ſoon 'after by ſome of the fathers, who, with 'more piety than judgment, thought that, 'as St. Paul compares the union of Chriſt 'to his church to a marriage, this poem 'ought alſo to be interpreted with reference 'to the ſame ſubject. But how is it con-'ſiſtent with this idea, that neither the name 'of God, nor of Chriſt, ever occurs in it? 'that there is not one religious or moral 'ſentiment to be found? that it is not once 'either quoted, or moſt diſtantly alluded to, 'in any part of the ſacred writings? on 'which account perhaps it is not directed 'to be read in our churches. We find alſo, 'that thoſe who attempt to trace the alle-

'gory

'gory in every part are ſoon loſt in an inex-
'tricable labyrinth.'

'*But I ſeem already to hear it objected, that*
'*it is a great preſumption to venture to diſſent*
'*from an opinion, which has been eſtabliſhed*
'*for near twenty centuries, and has been*
'*abetted by great, good, and learned men dur-*
'*ing all that long interval; and that this novel*
'*opinion may tend to weaken the foundation*
'*of the church of Chriſt. To this I reply, that*
'*mere length of time is but a ſandy foundation*
'*for the baſis of truth to reſt upon; that all*
'*that it can in reaſon pretend to is, to teach us*
'*caution before we quit eſtabliſhed opinions:*
'*but ſurely it ought not to preclude us from*
'*making due inquiries and uſing our rational*
'*powers; or upon due conviction of former*
'*errors, from publicly detecting them.* In re-
'gard to any ſuppoſed inconvenience accru-
'ing to the chriſtian religion, I really ſee
'none. On the contrary, as it is ſo well
'eſtabliſhed on *the ſure word of prophecy,*
'which *thrones, principalities, and powers,*
'cannot prevail againſt, it appears to me
'more for the intereſt of that religion to
'quit an untenable poſt, than to expoſe it

'to

'to the aſſault of enemies, who muſt inevi-
'tably ſoon become maſters of it.' *Durell's* critical remarks, &c. p. 298. 299.

It belongs to our ſubject, and may be of ſervice to you to mention, that this learned man, has in the ſame work, p. 22. &c. pointed out the true reading of that paſſage, Job xix. 25, &c. ſo much miſrepreſented in our engliſh tranſlation, where it is put, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my ſkin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God,*" &c. He afterwards gives the following paraphraſe of the paſſage, as he has reſtored it. 'I know 'that I have yet a deliverer *(e)* left, who will 'hereafter

(e) For tranſlating the original, which is a general word, *deliverer*, and not *redeemer*, Dr. Durell in the beginning of his comment on this text, renders this reaſon. 'As I think 'it will appear that there is no alluſion to Chriſt, or to the 'reſurrection of the body, in this paſſage, it ſeems better 'to ſubſtitute a word inſtead of *redeemer*, which may not 'miſlead our ideas.'

I reckon this a valuable criticiſm, and worthy of being extended to a variety of caſes. Ambiguous words in the vernacular tranſlations of the bible, and in public ſermons and diſcourſes, ſhould be avoided, where it can be done.

The

'hereafter eſpouſe my cauſe, even on this 'ſide the grave; and that after theſe men 'ſhall have exerciſed their cruelty upon me, 'which I compare to flaying me alive, I 'ſhall at length ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee, 'and my eyes ſhall behold, declaring him-'ſelf in my favour, and no longer alienated 'from me, as he ſeems at preſent.' The worthy author then adds;

'As for the interpretation which converts 'the paſſage into a prophecy of the reſur-'rection of the body, beſides that it implies 'a degree of light ill correſponding with the 'times, in which either Job is ſuppoſed to 'have lived, or this book to have been 'written; it requires ſuch interpolation of 'new words, and forced conſtruction of 'thoſe

The term, *the redeemer*, for inſtance, which cuſtom in our engliſh language has appropriated to Chriſt, (as alſo the word *Saviour*) ſhould cautiouſly be uſed where the Almighty Being and not Chriſt is intended, leſt the undiſcerning hearer or reader miſtake you, and carry away the notion that you ſpoke of Chriſt. So long as the bulk of chriſtians, though in words they deny it, do in fact worſhip more gods than one, all ſuch doubtful phraſes ſhould be diſcarded by thoſe who are the worſhipers of one God only, and are deſirous to promote that worſhip.

'thoſe found in the text, that I am fully 'perſuaded, with the allowance of ſuch 'liberties, an ingenious conjecturer may 'make almoſt any text of ſcripture depoſe 'in favour of this or of any other doctrine. 'The beſt commentators have therefore juſtly 'exploded it. Nor let it be imagined that 'we are undermining the foundations of 'our faith, by withdrawing a ſupport that 'does not belong to it. It remains firmly 'fixed on the baſis of truth, which cannot 'be moved, and wants no aſſiſtance from 'falſhood or error. But neither are we in 'any wiſe allowed to *handle the word of God* '*deceitfully*, from an apprehenſion of the ill 'uſe, which unſtable or wicked men may 'make of a right interpretation of it, at the 'hazard of their own ſalvation.'

A fitter, or more juſt vindication could not have been made, of the freedom of Dr. Prieſtley's diſcuſſion of the ſacred writings, than in the apology, which this learned author offers for himſelf, and for the liberties he hath taken with the text, and canon of ſcripture, in theſe two quotations which I have cited from him. The doubting con-

cerning the genuineneſs of any particular part of ſcripture, or even on good grounds rejecting it, is ſo far from tending to invalidate, that it confirms the authority of thoſe other parts, whoſe evidence is not, nor can juſtly be called in queſtion. You have therefore no reaſon to be apprehenſive that the goſpel will ſuffer from the freeſt inveſtigations. And if I miſtake not, you will by no means be pleaſed with the alarms which Dr. Horne would raiſe againſt Dr. Prieſtley on this account, and to which he makes you parties, p. 11. 12. of his undergraduate's letter. Stript of the little decorations from my friend's laboratory, which muſt be allowed to the good preſident of Magdalen, as there is nothing elſe to recommend it, the plain amount of what he ſays, is; that Dr. Prieſtley firſt labours to twiſt the ſcripture to a ſenſe it will not bear; or, if that cannot be done, to find out ſome old MS. reading to favour his hereſy: if this fails, he makes no ſcruple of altering the text in an arbitrary manner; and when nothing elſe will do, he concludes, that the ſacred writer

writer was a fool, and knew nothing at all about the matter.

Such general accuſations, thrown out in the air without proof, are fit only for the mob of readers, who never think; and can affect theſe only. Whether Dr. Prieſtley interprets ſcripture rightly, or not; or diſcards any part of it without cauſe, can only be determined by its proper evidence.

SECTION VIII.

CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

The eternal God a feeble ſuffering man! How the minds of many are capable of being reconciled to ſuch a ſtrange aſſertion. Throughout the hebrew ſcriptures, Chriſt uniformly ſpoken of as a man, and a great prophet, who was to be born of a particular tribe and family among them. The Jews expected him, and thoſe who received him, believed in him, in that character only. The three former evangeliſts, and Luke in his ſecond treatiſe, never ſeem to have had a thought of Chriſt being any other than a man like

themſelves, with extraordinary powers from God. The evangeliſt St. John and the reſt of the writers of the New Teſtament do not differ from the preceding. A ſingular teſtimony to the ſpreading of this true doctrine concerning Chriſt. The teſtimony to it of the late Dr. Le Courayer.

IN one place Dr. Horne introduces you thus addreſſing Dr. Prieſtley, making himſelf one of your number, as uſual. 'With 'the ſcriptures open before us, we can 'no more believe that our Lord Jeſus 'was only a man, like ourſelves; we can 'no more adopt your interpretation of thoſe 'texts, which aſſert or imply him to be 'God, than we can believe the Alcoran, 'or adopt the ſtories which it contains." Undergraduate's letter, p. 25.

Dr. Horne may make this declaration for himſelf, though I flatter myſelf you will be perſuaded, that it does not beſpeak him to have much conſidered the ſubject. If I be not miſtaken, you would have anſwered for yourſelves with more modeſty and leſs prejudice;

judice; and perhaps in ſome ſuch manner as this;

'We will conſider, Dr. Prieſtley, what 'you offer, from ſcripture, to prove our 'Lord Jeſus Chriſt, not to be the eternal 'God, but a man like ourſelves. For we 'frankly own to you, that we have never 'examined this matter, as you wiſh us to 'do. Our education has hitherto led us to 'embrace the contrary, as a true doctrine, 'intirely upon the authority of others, with-'out any proper inquiry and conviction 'of our own. And to ſay the truth, we 'oftentimes know not what to make of 'God Almighty being a weak mortal like 'ourſelves.'

I have no doubt but I ſpeak the natural ſentiment of many of you here. And indeed this is a doctrine that would ſtartle with its impoſſibility, every underſtanding of man, that was not familiarized to it from the cradle, or that could ſuffer himſelf to entertain one free thought about it: and yet with Dr. Horne, and many others, it is the corner-ſtone of chriſtianity. So ſtrong

are their prejudices, and their minds ſo faſt cloſed up by the awful notion of Chriſt being the moſt high God, firſt inſtilled into them, that there is not the leaſt crevice left for one ray of light to penetrate afterwards. From the liberality of the times in which your happier lot is caſt, and at your open and pliant age, truth may expect a fairer hearing, and gain admittance.

The general outline of the evidence in the ſacred writing, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who, and what manner of perſon he was, I ſhall lay before you, to be weighed in the even ſcales of your own judgments: deſiring you however to excuſe the poſitive, peremptory manner, in which I may ſpeak of his being intirely one of the human race, moſt highly favoured of God, which I cannot avoid if I ſpeak at all; ſo plain appears to me the evidence for it, throughout the bible. You will determine for yourſelves, whether there be ſufficient grounds for my perſuaſion.

In

In your reſearches then firſt into the hebrew ſcriptures, you will find, that in all the mention made of the Meſſiah, and the predictions relating to him, he is always ſpoken of, expreſsly, as one of the human race, and not as of any different condition of being; and in nothing beyond other men, ſave that he was to be the moſt honoured, beloved *(f)* ſervant, prophet and meſſenger of the Divine Being, that had ever appeared.

If the prophet Iſaiah, ſpeaking long before of the goſpel-times, ſays, xxxv. 4, *they ſhall ſee the glory of the* LORD, *and the excellency of our God. Behold your God ſhall come and ſave you:* and the like, in other places: We ſay, God did come, at that time, in and by his ſervant Jeſus, *upon whom he put his ſpirit*, xlii. 1. xi. 2. And God truly came, in the ſcripture-phraſe, though it was only the prophet, or Chriſt, who

(f) Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my ſpirit upon him. If. xlii. 1. *And the ſpirit of the* LORD *ſhall reſt upon him, the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding*, &c. xi. 2.

who came in his name: in the ſame manner as God is ſaid to ſpeak, *(g)* though it was only a prophet or Chriſt, who ſpoke in his name.

If the prophet Micah v. 2. deſcribing Chriſt before hand, ſays of him, *whoſe goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting*: ſuch eſteemed critics as Munſter and Calvin, who cannot be ſuſpected of partiality, will tell you, that what the prophet intended was, that *his goings forth were* decreed *from eternity*.

You would never of yourſelves ſuſpect, in reading the Old Teſtament, that Jeſus was the God who appeared to, and acted, and was worſhiped, by the patriarchs, and Iſraelites; but you will ſee, in the courſe of this work, how this ſtrange notion was brought in, and ſupported, by heathen converts to the goſpel, from whom it has come down to our times, and is ſtill maintained by not a few chriſtians.

Paſſing

(g) God, *who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son.* Heb. i. 1, 2.

Paſſing from the hebrew to the chriſtian ſcriptures, you find in the goſpel-hiſtory, that the jews never expected their Meſſiah to be any thing, but a man, like themſelves, of a particular tribe and family, marked out by their prophets. And when he appeared, he was accordingly acknowleged, as a deſcendant of David, their favourite king; and he himſelf took to the title.

His mother, his kindred, his apoſtles, never had the leaſt idea of his being the eternal God, *(h)* but a human creature, like themſelves, highly favoured by him. The ſacred hiſtorians give an account of his birth, from Mary his mother, as being like that of other men, however different the manner

(h) Some have imagined, that the ancient Jews were acquainted with the doctrine of a trinity, and expected their Meſſiah to be Almighty God himſelf. See a full confutation of all that the Archdeacon of St. Albans, Dr. Horſeley, hath advanced upon this point, in the eleventh of Dr. Prieſtley's letters to him, intitled, *Of the time when Chriſt began to be conſidered as God, and the opinion of the antient and modern Jews with reſpect to the Meſſiah.*

ner of her conception of him; at firſt a helpleſs babe; growing up, acquiring the faculties and powers of a rational creature, by degrees; ſtanding in need of meat and drink, ſupported in life, as all of us are; ſubject to hunger, thirſt, pain, and at laſt dying as other men, in like circumſtances.

In peruſing the memoirs of the three firſt hiſtorians concerning Chriſt, you will ſee no reaſon to conclude, that they looked upon him as any thing more than a human creature, of their own country and nation, raiſed up for extraordinary purpoſes by Almighty God (*i*).

You may add, that this is confirmed by the teſtimony of antiquity. For the chriſtian

(*i*) See a proof of this, not only with reſpect to theſe three evangeliſts, but the whole of the ſcriptures alſo of the New Teſtament, in commentaries and eſſays, publiſhed by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the ſcriptures, vol. 1. p. 391, under the title of 'An Inquiry into 'the evidence which points out Chriſt to have been only 'a creature of the human race, inveſted with extraordi'nary powers from God; as it ariſes from his own decla'rations, and thoſe of his apoſtles and evangeliſts.'

tian fathers in general agree in the opinion, that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, treat only of Chriſt's humanity. But then they argue as if theſe evangeliſts knew of his being alſo a divine perſon, though they did not ſay any thing of it; and that they deſignedly ſpoke of him only as a human being, and that John, who came after them, ſupplied the deficiency, by treating of his divinity.

This however is all an after-thought of theſe men, to account for notions of Chriſt, which they had taken up, not from the ſcriptures, but from philoſophy, and heatheniſh conceits of the deity, which they had imported into chriſtianity. For there is no cauſe to think that the three former evangeliſts wrote with each others privity: much leſs that they had any idea of John writing after them, in the manner that is ſuppoſed, and that he was to take one department in ſpeaking of Chriſt, they another. Unqueſtionably they teach and tell every thing, which they thought to be of importance for the world to know, reſpecting their divine maſter, as if no one

was

was to have come after them, or ſay any more about him.

I have no doubt but this argument alone will appear to you deciſive, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was only a human creature, with an extraordinary commiſſion and powers from Almighty God; eſpecially when you take into conſideration with it, that there is no ground for the ſuppoſition of the early chriſtian fathers, who have been followed in it ever ſince, that John ſet himſelf particularly to treat of Chriſt's divinity, upon ſeeing it to have been omitted by the other evangeliſts; after whom he is generally acknowleged to have written, and to have peruſed their narratives.

But it will be found by you on examination, and from what will be in this work propoſed to you, that John does not differ from the three former evangeliſts, or ſpeak of Chriſt as any other than a human being; nay, that he *expreſsly declares* that it was not his deſign to treat of any divinity, or any thing more than human, belonging to his maſter Jeſus, except what related to his divine

vine miſſion, and powers, beſtowed upon him.

The teſtimony of St. Luke in his goſpel. concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being intirely one of the human race, and nothing more, receives a moſt ſingular confirmation from his ſecond treatiſe, called *The Acts.* This claims your attention the more, as it recites how, and in what manner, our Lord was ſpoken of, and preached, by his choſen followers after his death and being taken up into heaven. And you will have a particular opportunity of forming your own judgments of the fact, from the examination which will hereafter be given of the laſt Bampton lecturer's aſſertions to the contrary.

St. Luke in particular introduces Paul, in his famous ſpeech, in one of the courts of juſtice, at Athens, declaring to them, that Jeſus Chriſt was a man, (ανηρ,) commiſſioned and appointed to a high and important office, under the *God that made the world.* (Acts xvii. 24. 31.) And you will be ſatisfied, that he could not, and will find, that he does not, ſay any thing in contradiction

tradiction to this declaration, in his epiſtles. You will particularly perceive, that the *creation of all things* by Jeſus Chriſt, which he therein ſometimes ſpeaks of, is no other than a moral and ſpiritual creation, a reformation of mankind; and this effected, not by any *immediate* perſonal agency of Chriſt after he left the world, but by the mighty and effectual motives of the goſpel, delivered by him to its firſt preachers, and the ſpirit and power of God accompanying them.

It will be evident to you, from the tract above mentioned, that the apoſtle John in his other writings, and Peter and James in their epiſtles, harmonize together with Paul and the four evangeliſts, in their ſentiment concerning their maſter, Jeſus Chriſt, that he was a man with an extraordinary divine commiſſion and power, and not a ſuperior being, or the eternal God. And as the apoſtles and all believers, mentioned in the New Teſtament, appear to have entertained no other idea of him; it was natural to expect, and Dr. Prieſtley has fully ſhewn, that chriſtians in general afterwards embraced

embraced and continued in this ſentiment for ſome centuries, though learned men ſoon fell into ſtrange heatheniſh fancies concerning Chriſt, and by degrees ſucceeded in changing the doctrine of the apoſtles intirely concerning him, as it is upheld in all the great churches of chriſtendom to this day.

This evidence, which I have thus put before you in a ſummary manner, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being not the eternal God, but one of our brethren of mankind, being the teſtimony of all the writers, and all the actors, introduced in the old and new Teſtament, who have ſpoken of him, or referred to him; and being, in ſound and appearance only, or by miſrepreſentation or miſconſtruction, *ſeemingly* contradicted by a few particular texts; is ſo vaſt and preponderant, that it muſt ſtrike every eye not wholly blinded by prejudice, that looks at it. And though it has to combat the long prepoſſeſſion of many ages, derived from the learned fathers as they are called, whoſe writings have been carefully preſerved, whilſt thoſe of their opponents have been ſuffered

to periſh; ſupported by the authority that ſtrikes vulgar minds with awe, that of ancient councils, of great and ſplendid churches, Romiſh, Greek, Gallican, of England, Scotland, Ireland, of proteſtant ſynods, prieſts, miniſters of almoſt all denominations, articles, creeds, confeſſions of faith, ancient and modern, catechiſms, &c. Yet ſuch is the force of truth, when permitted to ſpread its penetrating beams, as at this day in this happy country of ours, that not a few are daily feeling its influence, and coming over from the worſhip of three or more divine perſons or Gods, to the acknowlegement and worſhip of one firſt cauſe and ſole benevolent author of all things, one ſovereign eternal Mind and Spirit, the ſingle perſon of HIM, whom the holy Jeſus, called (John xx. 17.) his father and our father, his God, and our God; and whom he conſtantly invoked in humble prayer, (xvii. 3.) as *the only true God.*

It was an unwilling teſtimony to the increaſe of the number of chriſtian unitarians, which was exhibited before the public a few

few months paſt, in a pamphlet intitled, 'Thoughts on the progreſs of Socinianiſm; 'with an inquiry into the cauſe and the 'cure. In a letter humbly addreſſed to 'learned, orthodox, and candid miniſters of 'all denominations,' &c.

In the preface, it is ſaid to have been drawn up for the moſt part by one perſon, but that ſeveral contributed to it, and all concerned, concurred in the publication. Whoever they were that had a hand in it, the good ſpirit and temper that prevails throughout towards thoſe chriſtians called ſocinians, but who differ very much from Socinus, does them great honour, and indeed is almoſt unexampled ſince the days of the excellent Tillotſon; who was unjuſtly accuſed of favouring their opinions, becauſe he ſpoke well of the men.

'That ſocinianiſm hath, for ſome years 'paſt, ſay theſe gentlemen, been making a 'rapid progreſs in this country, is a fact too 'evident to need a proof, and in our idea, a 'matter greatly to be lamented; as we can-'not but apprehend that this doctrine robs 'the goſpel of ſome of its peculiar glories,

'brings chriſtianity nearly to a level with 'the religion of nature, and thus tends to 'prepare the way for deiſm.'

'We are far from thinking that its abet-'tors ſee it in this light: ſome of them, we 'readily admit, are men of upright views, 'and excellent moral characters, who mean 'to ſerve the intereſts of chriſtianity. But 'this does not alter our views of the doc-'trine itſelf, nor leſſen our apprehenſion of 'its dangerous tendency. We have not to do 'with men, but things.

'It has been ſaid, *that the great deſign of 'chriſtianity is to engage men to live ſober, 'righteous, and godly lives; and that this end 'is as well ſecured by the ſocinian view of it as 'any other.* The former of theſe propoſi-'tions we readily allow. The latter we muſt 'diſpute. The doctrine of the atonement 'by the death of Chriſt, appears to us to be 'founded upon ſuch views of the divine 'perfections, and to ſuggeſt ſuch motives to 'univerſal holineſs, as well as to yield ſuch 'conſolation to the penitent guilty, that the 'denial of it greatly weakens the efficacy of 'the goſpel as a practical ſyſtem, though it

'does

'does not utterly deſtroy it. And we ſee 'this doctrine ſo clearly revealed in the ſa- 'cred ſcriptures, that it is matter of aſtoniſh- 'ment to us that any, who receive them as 'the rule of their faith, can oppoſe, or for 'a moment doubt concerning it. Nor can 'we help thinking, that to reconcile the 'ſcriptures to the opinions of the ſocinians, 'neceſſarily requires them, to be tortured in 'ſuch a degree, as muſt tend to give to the 'generality of readers ſuch an idea of their 'obſcurity, as is likely to promote ſcepticiſm 'with reſpect to their divine original.

'On theſe accounts *we cannot but expreſs 'a painful concern, while we obſerve the pro- 'greſs of the ſocinian tenets, and apprehend the 'increaſing ſpread of them*; unleſs ſome vigor- 'ous methods be adopted to prevent it; and 'we feel an ardent wiſh that you who are 'ſet for the defence of the goſpel, would 'exert yourſelves in order to ſo important 'an object. It is with a view of exciting 'you to this, that we preſume to publiſh 'the preſent addreſs.

'Far be it from us to ſuggeſt or indulge a 'wiſh, that you ſhould call in the aid of

'the civil magiſtrate to reſtrain thoſe, who 'with ſo much ſucceſs preach or write in 'defence of any erroneous opinions whatſo-'ever. We are fully perſuaded, that all 'have an equal right to think for them-'ſelves, and to publiſh their opinions in 'what manner they pleaſe.'

In reply to this repreſentation of the tendency of the opinions of thoſe called ſocinians, I would only obſerve; that unleſs it be deiſm, to believe in a God, and a Providence, and a future *eternal* life undiſcoverable by nature's light, and made known only by the goſpel of Chriſt, unitarians are far from favouring or leading to it. And who are the faireſt critics, and interpreters of the ſacred writings, and whether the doctrine of atonement be contained in them, and honourable to God, you will have ſome opportunity of judging in the farther peruſal of theſe ſheets.

Much about the ſame time with the foregoing, was publiſhed by Dr. Bell, prebendary of Weſtminſter, a poſthumous piece, intitled *Declaration de mes derniers ſentimens ſur*

ſur les différens dogmes de la religion, par feu (*k*) Pierre François le Courayer; in which, among

(*k*) He was a perſon of remarkable ſimplicity of manners, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, and of a conſtant even chearfulneſs, befitting the innocence of his life, and his well-grounded hopes of exchanging it for a better. I lived formerly for months together under the ſame roof with him, in a noble family, who had been his friendly protectors, from the time of his being forced to fly his country for his religious opinions. What the ſociety of St. Genevieve in Paris is now, I know not: but upwards of 30 years ago, when I ſaw ſeveral of the order both there and in the provinces, they retained a high eſteem for this good father, *ce bon pere*, as his familiar friends were wont to call him, and inherited a portion of his liberal ſpirit. The librarian of St. Genevieve in particular, the ſame I believe, who ſucceeded him in that honourable poſt, deeply regretted to me in private, that load of ſuperſtition and idolatry, to which he was a daily witneſs, and moſt ardently wiſhed for a reformation.

I ſaw Dr. Le Courayer in the year 1774, when he was 93, and had loſt his ſight, but in other reſpects enjoyed his faculties very well.

At the very moment that this is paſſing through the preſs, March 25, I receive a preſent from the truly learned and my much eſteemed friend Dr. Kippis, of his Life of Dr. Lardner, replete with many curious circumſtances and facts, which tend to illuſtrate the writings, and to give us a fuller knowlege of the character of that excellent perſon. And I cannot but be particularly pleaſed to find my ſentiments

among other things, this learned foreigner, who had taken refuge among us, diſcovers himſelf to have been a believer of the divine unity in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, rejecting the notion of the ſpirit being any thing diſtinct from God himſelf, and conſidering Jeſus Chriſt as nothing but a human creature, and the inſtrument employed by the Divine Being, and inveſted by him with extraordinary wiſdom, and powers. It were to have been wiſhed, that he had dropt intirely

concurring with thoſe of this his judicious writer, with regard to the late Dr. Le Courayer, and the preſent growing prevalence of the opinions called ſocinian, reſpecting the perſon of Chriſt. What Dr, Kippis obſerves concerning the former, I ſhall tranſcribe.

'The celebrated Father Le Courayer, author of the diſ-
'ſertation on the validity of engliſh ordinations, continued
'to the end of his life in the communion of the roman
'catholic church. Nevertheleſs in the declaration of his
'laſt ſentiments on the doctrines of religion, recently pub-
'liſhed, he has delivered ſuch views of things reſpecting
'the Trinity, as Dr. Lardner himſelf muſt have highly
'approved. The paſſage is ſo ſtriking and breathes ſo li-
'beral a ſpirit, that I ſhall inſert it below."

The Life of Dr. *Lardner*, p. lxi. lxii.

N. B. A great part of Dr. Kippis's quotation is given you by me.

tirely the words, *trinity*, *incarnation*, when he actually and profeſſedly retained nothing of what is commonly intended by them. But he might imagine, that he ſhould thus give leſs offence, and more eaſily remove the prejudices of his readers. It is not a good precedent however, and *name* and *thing* were better to be abandoned together.

We are told in the preface, that the manuſcript was given by the author to the late princeſs Amelia, who had the higheſt eſteem for him; and who, at her death, bequeathed it to Dr. Bell. Dr. Le Courayer in putting it into the princeſs's hands, wiſhed it not to be made public in his life-time, for fear of any diſagreeable conſequences, and the reflections that might be caſt upon him for it. But as that period is paſt, and he has been long out of the reach of mortal things, and it is apparent that he intended it ſhould one day be printed, the literary and chriſtian world are indebted to the truly learned and reſpectable editor, for the honourable part he has acted, in not ſuppreſſing free religious ſentiments; which ſome have been known to do in ſituations like his; but fairly producing

ducing them before the public. I ſhall make one or two extracts from it (*l*).

A declaration of my laſt ſentiments on the different doctrines of religion.

'BEING ſoon to appear before God, (begins the venerable writer, then in his 86th year) and deſirous to act the ſincere part which becomes every one, as well as to furniſh all, into whoſe hands this writing may fall, with that teſtimony which all perſons owe to truth; urged likewiſe by my conſcience to declare my thoughts on the doctrines of chriſtianity, and the differences which divide chriſtian ſocieties, I proceed to do it with that ſimplicity and integrity which become a man in the near proſpect of death.

'I believe, (p. 5.) that there is but one God; and that his ſpirit is not a ſubſtance diſtinct from him; and that Jeſus Chriſt, to whom the deity was moſt intimately

(*l*) There is a tranſlation of this tract, with an account of Dr. Le Courayer prefixed, printed for Johnſon, St. Paul's church-yard.

mately united, is his ſon, by virtue of that union. This is all the *trinity*, that I find in the goſpel. And I have no conception that any other kind of trinity can accord with the unity of God. I know that many of the fathers have had recourſe to the multiplication of ſubſtances, to give us an idea of this myſtery; and others have imagined other ſyſtems, which ſavoured more of philoſophy than of the goſpel, and ſerved rather to darken the ſubject than to throw light upon it. But I make a wide difference between theſe ſyſtems and the goſpel; and my deep reſpect for the latter makes me think it of little conſequence to adopt notions, which often have much obſcurity in them, and are ſometimes involved in contradiction.

"The *incarnation* moreover has nothing in it contrary to the doctrine of the unity of God, any more than the *trinity*. Accordingly, it is extremely remarkable, that neither Jeſus Chriſt, nor his apoſtles, have ever repreſented theſe myſteries to us, as containing any thing incomprehenſible, or not to be reconciled to reaſon. God being deſirous

deſirous to draw men from their errors, and purify them from their ſins, filled Jeſus Chriſt with his wiſdom, inveſted him with his power, *gave not the ſpirit by meaſure* (John iii. 34) *to him*, as to the prophets; but united himſelf intimately to him, ſo that Jeſus Chriſt appeared (Phil. ii. 6.) in *the form* of God; who conſtituted him (Acts ii. 36.) Lord and Chriſt, prince (v. 31.) and Saviour; . . . . . by imparting to him his power and authority, made him at the ſame time a partaker of his glory, ſo that *he that honoureth the ſon* (John v. 23.) *honoureth the father who hath ſent him.* And thus, every thing being conſtantly referred to God, and not terminating in Jeſus Chriſt, who is conſidered only as the organ and inſtrument of the power and mercy of the Father, it is always God alone who is the object of our adorations; and there is nothing that ſhocks us in conceiving, that HE can communicate himſelf to *a man* as fully, and as intimately, as he judges it neceſſary for his own glory, and the ſalvation of mankind."

SEC-

SECTION IX.

Chriſt's power neceſſarily limited. How far it is to be ſuppoſed, that he paſſed through childhood, and youth, without any faults or breach of duty. That he was of a nature liable to fall into ſin, acknowleged by himſelf, and declared by his apoſtle. Of the limitations of Chriſt's knowlege, and the inſtances of it produced by Dr. Prieſtley.

THE inference that I would make from the arguments in the foregoing ſection, and from theſe two extraordinary teſtimonies, is; that as the evidence is ſo ſtrong and unſurmountable; and all the rational unprejudiced world, who turn their minds to religion and the ſacred writings, are ſeeing it every day more and more, *viz.* that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was truly one of the human race, diſtinguiſhed only from the reſt of mankind

kind by favourable circumſtances of providence in his birth, by extraordinary gifts of a divine power and wiſdom upon entering on his great office and public miniſtry, and by his conſummate piety, and virtue: it cannot be blameable in any one, taking the ſcripture for his guide, as Dr. Prieſtley has done, to inquire into the character, and the extent of the power, belonging to this favoured man, and meſſenger of heaven.

As being one of the human kind then, you will be perſuaded, that Jeſus the ſon of Mary, muſt have become every thing gradually, by little and little; and through the attention, and help of thoſe about him, he acquired the powers of ſpeech, memory, reaſon; and the different habits which belong to human creatures.

In his progreſſive acquiſitions and improvements from his infancy, to the attainment of ſuch a degree and ſtability of piety, benevolence, and virtuous ſelf-government, which he appears to have poſſeſſed, when he entered on his divine office of teacher and ſaviour of mankind, at thirty years of age; that

that during this long period, he had, from the firſt, and all along, been exempt from the heedleſſneſs, and little follies of a child, and never afterwards ſubject to any neglect or faults, ſo as to need the being told of them, or to correct himſelf for them, you will judge whether it be compatible with any idea of a human being, and whether the ſuppoſition of ſuch things would detract from our idea of the perfection of ſuch a being afterwards. It is certain, that by the diſcipline and correction of errors, and infirmities, propenſities and inclinations to wrong things, though not allowed or indulged, we learn to dread ſin and evil as children to dread the fire by coming too near to it; a habit of vigilance and circumſpection is acquired, and we become more ſtrongly diſpoſed to, bent upon, and more laſtingly and unchangeably formed to and fixed in virtue and all goodneſs.

So far as the ſacred hiſtory ſays any thing of our Lord's infant ſtate, and youthful character, and improvements, they do not contradict

tradict this idea of their being like thoſe of others of mankind, in ſimilar ſituations.

St. Luke ſays of him, ii. 40. 52. *And the child grew and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, filled with wiſdom: and the favour of God was upon him.—And Jeſus increaſed in wiſdom, and age, and in favour with God and man.*

Of John the Baptiſt, the ſame hiſtorian i. 15. 80. *he ſhall be filled with the holy ſpirit from his mother's womb. And the child grew and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit.*

It is alſo ſaid of Samuel, the prophet, 1 Sam. ii. 26. iii. 19. *And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour with the* LORD, *and alſo with men. And Samuel grew, and the* LORD *was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground.*

Now from this comparative language of ſcripture concerning theſe three perſons, we conclude, that our Lord, like the prophet Samuel, and John the baptiſt, who had alſo an eſpecial deſignation from heaven; was, from his infancy, turned to God, by his providential care, which met him at his birth, and furniſhed the means

of

of a pious education: and that together with his years, the goodneſs of his diſpoſition, his piety, humility, integrity, benevolence, increaſed; and, from ſmall beginnings, were continually ſtrengthened and improved. For theſe could not, that we know of, be infuſed, perfect, all at once, into him, or any *human* being; nor do any ſuppoſe it to have happened but by a gradual proceſs, in Samuel and John the baptiſt; the ſame therefore is to be concluded concerning Chriſt.

2. You perceive, that ſimilar language is uſed concerning the divine extraordinary protection over Samuel and John the baptiſt, as over Chriſt, though they were characters far inferior to him. But we do not conclude thoſe two men to have been under the immediate direction of God in any thing, except what related to their prophetic office, in aſcertaining and fulfilling their divine miſſion, and was beyond the reach of their natural powers. Neither have we any grounds to conclude otherwiſe concerning our Lord: but that in ordinary things even relating to his miniſtry, where natural abilities ſufficed, he acted according to his

beſt judgment; which in him appears to have been moſt ſtrong, acute, and comprehenſive.

3. And as theſe two prophets, Samuel and John the baptiſt, all will confeſs, were men liable to fall: ſo have we no reaſon to conclude, that Chriſt was impeccable. He himſelf appears to have thought, and to have been ſenſible of the contrary, when under his diſtreſsful apprehenſions in the garden of Gethſemane, *(m)* he prayed ſo earneſtly to be ſupported under the heavy trial, leſt he ſhould not be able to go through it with proper fortitude, but ſhrink from it. *St. Paul ſays,* Heb. iv. 15. *he was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without ſin.*

If he had not been liable to fall, you will conſider, whether it would not have been frivolous and a kind of mockery to put temptations before him; *i. e.* to put in his

(m) And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, ſaying; O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me! nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.

his way what could not affect him, what would be no trial to him.

Mr. Tucker, the excellent author of the "Light of Nature purſued," though no one, perhaps ever more intirely harmonized with Dr. Prieſtley in his ſentiments on the doctrine of neceſſity, and the perſon of Chriſt, does nevertheleſs here take a contrary part: and ſuppoſes our Lord to have been preſerved, in the moſt intire rectitude, without a wiſh or deſire for inſtance, of this world's eaſe, or pleaſure, or greatneſs, from his very childhood, by a continual divine agency upon him. 'This height of perfection,' ſays he, 'which nature cannot reach, it may be raiſed to by divine interpoſition: and the man Jeſus having this interpoſition to aſſiſt him continually, might actually be that wiſe man which the philoſophers ſought in vain, and which was no where elſe to be found, but in imagination.' See alſo what immediately follows, p. 168. vol. viii. *(n)*.

Whether

(*n*) The ſame writer adds ſoon after, p. 170. upon the ſame ſubject: 'It was fitting that the divine power ſhould

Whether now it be not agreeable to ſcripture juſtly interpreted, and more conſiſtent with, and ſuitable to our Lord's character as

'not be joined with extraordinary endowments of body and 'mind, leſt the effects of them ſhould be confounded with 'the fruits of moral wiſdom: therefore the filial character 'was united to an illiterate carpenter, who, we need not 'imagine gained more knowlege thereby in mathematics, 'aſtronomy, geography, policy, metaphyſics or other 'ſciences, than any common carpenter might have attained, if we could ſuppoſe him never once to have neglected 'the improvement of his talents. What ſupernatural knowlege he had, was imparted to him, and the wonders he 'worked were performed, by the father, in the ſame manner as thoſe of Moſes and the prophets.'

If I do not miſtake, this worthy perſon ſeems to ſpeak too degradingly of our Saviour's natural parts and abilities, though I am far from ſaying that in his ſituation, they would have carried him to deep knowlege in mathematics, and aſtronomy. But ſurely, the ſublime ſimplicity of his inſtructions, his ſingular preſence of mind and the remarkable aptneſs and acuteneſs of his replies upon all occaſions, together with the beauty and correctneſs of his imagination in his parables, mark what we call a fine genius above the common rate.

As to Mr. Tucker's quaint term of *filial character*, which he ſometimes alſo calls *God* in his *ſecond perſon*; it appears that all he meant by it, was the divine power or gifts imparted in Chriſt. He uſed this language to avoid offence, and appear orthodox; when he was, as has been elſewhere

as a man, to have been ſo near perfection, as he appears to have been, by the means and aſſiſtance afforded him, without ſuch a continual operation upon him, although he fell ſhort of abſolute perfection; you will determine, on weighing well the matter.

To thoſe who do not attend to the overwhelming evidence ſketched out above, teſtifying our Saviour to have been originally and truly a man, and conſequently of very limited powers, Dr. Prieſtley will appear to have given a moſt degrading repreſentation of him, in what Dr. Horne has picked up and put together, in a very uncandid manner, from different parts of his works, p. 16, 17. of his undergraduate's letter. He makes you, who are real undergraduates and commencing your ſtudy of the ſcriptures, parties with him of courſe: but you will not prejudge the cauſe, till you

elſewhere ſhewn, a compleat unitarian: a compliance much to be lamented, though he gave into it from a good deſign, as he thought. See "An Hiſtorical view of the ſtate of the unitarian doctrine and worſhip," &c. p. 406. &c.

have heard what the party accuſed has to ſay for himſelf.

You have juſt now ſeen, what ignorance in many things, Mr. Tucker ſcruples not to aſcribe to Chriſt; in mathematics, in natural philoſophy, &c. Now ſuppoſing, that our Lord alſo, which ſeems to be the ſentiment of Dr. Prieſtley, had held thoſe called demoniacs in the ſcripture to have been really poſſeſſed by demons, whoſe diſorder we now know to have been owing to natural cauſes, and cureable, where the cure is poſſible, by natural means; this would be not the leaſt impeachment to his ſufficiency, for his office of teacher of the divine will to men, any more than his ignorance of the true ſyſtem of the world, ſince diſcovered by Sir Iſaac Newton.

Put the caſe alſo, that our Saviour had applied a text of the Old Teſtament, as relating to himſelf, which did not to you, or others, appear to be ſuch: without affirming any thing, ſuppoſe only that it was ſo; it would not affect his character as a teacher come from God: which was not to explain exactly each particle of the hebrew ſcriptures;

ſcriptures; but to declare, with authority from God, what men were to do to be happy, and to teach them how to ſecure his favour for ever.

Among the other things, quoted from Dr. Prieſtley, Dr Horne brings him in ſaying, 'that the ſcripture aſſertion, that Chriſt '*knew no ſin*, means much the ſame with 'St. John's aſſertion, (1 John iii. 9.) that 'a true chriſtian *cannot commit ſin*, that is, '*cannot commit any act of groſs ſin.*' I cannot do better than let you hear Dr. Prieſtley's own words, leſt you ſhould hence conclude, that in his eſtimate our Saviour was in nothing above the ordinary rate of ſincere chriſtians. *Theol. Repoſ.* p. 445.

"It will be ſaid, that if Chriſt's virtues were properly *his own*, and of courſe imperfect, he might be liable to *ſin*, as well as ſubject to *error*. I anſwer, that I know of no inconvenience to chriſtianity, in ſuppoſing, that neither he, nor any other man, was *naturally impeccable*. He himſelf lays no claim to any ſuch prerogative, and the object of his miſſion did not require it. He ſays, indeed, to the jews, John viii. 46.

Which of you convinceth me of ſin? but by *ſin*, in that place, the connexion naturally leads us to underſtand, *impoſture* only: and when he was ſtiled *good*, thinking, we may ſuppoſe, from the manner in which it was ſaid, that more was meant by the appellation that he was intitled to, he expreſsly diſclaimed it, ſaying, *there was none good but God.* If we interpret the language of ſcripture rigorouſly, we muſt ſay, that Job was a perfect character: for it is ſaid of him, Job ii. 3. that *he was a perfect and an upright man.*

" It is alſo ſaid of Zacharias and Elizabeth, *that they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameleſs.* This encomium is certainly equivalent to what is ſaid of Chriſt, 1 Pet. ii. 22. *he did not ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth,* 2 Cor. v. 21. *He made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin.* Heb. vii. 26. *Such a high prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners.*

" As to thoſe, who lay great ſtreſs on the literal interpretation of ſcripture, and who think

think that we are authorized to infer from the paſſages that I have quoted, that the character of Chriſt muſt have been almoſt infinitely greater than that of other men, I would recommend to their attention, beſides the paſſages quoted above, (which, if alſo interpreted literally, would lead us to conceive of the characters of various other perſons, as being equal to that of Chriſt,) what the apoſtle John ſays concerning all chriſtians, 1 John iii. 9, *Whoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* If this language, reſpecting chriſtians in general, is not to be interpreted literally, what can oblige us to a literal interpretation of ſimilar expreſſions, relating to the excellence of Chriſt's character. And, if in this paſſage, and every other, in which the word *ſin* is uſed, we are to underſtand ſome overt act of iniquity, ſomething that all the world would condemn, as baſe and wrong, we muſt likewiſe reſtrict the meaning of it in the ſame manner, when it is ſaid, that *Chriſt had no ſin*; and it is only from the language of ſcripture, and not from

from any mere imagination of our own, that we can be authorized to form any judgment in the caſe. *All the virtue that human nature, ſuch as we obſerve it to be, can attain, I am as ready, as any perſon, to aſcribe to Chriſt. There is a greatneſs and dignity in his character, ſuperior to that of any other man. I flatter myſelf that I feel it, and I am ſure that I rejoice in the contemplation of it.* But I think alſo that I can account for the ſuperiority of his virtue, and the exalted nature of his feelings, without ſuppoſing that, till he was divinely inſpired, (which I ſee no occaſion to fix at an earlier period than a little before his baptiſm) he was naturally a greater, or better man, than Abraham, or Joſeph, or Daniel."

This extract will give you Dr. Prieſtley's own ſentiments of Chriſt, ſomewhat different than you would take them to be from the repreſentation of the preſident of Magdalen college: not that he intends to miſlead, but his prejudices magnify objects.

What he concludes with in that place, as ſomething highly wrong in Dr. Prieſtley, he

he couches in theſe words; 'that even 'now, during the interval between his aſcen- 'ſion and ſecond coming, Chriſt is *in a ſtate* '*of pupillage.*'

Dr. Horne muſt unqueſtionably be diſturbed, that any thing of this ſort ſhould be aſſerted of one, whom he looks upon as the eternal, omniſcient God, and the object of prayer and worſhip; but then, one would think, it ſhould have reſtrained him from dwelling on the idea in a jocular way, if any real occaſion had been given for it; the words, *in a ſtate of pupillage*, being his own.

In whatever language however it be told, the fact is true, that Jeſus Chriſt, who was of the human race; and only brought into exiſtence at the beginning of our chriſtian era, is and muſt be for ever a learner. You will not be ſurprized at it, as this neceſſarily follows from his being a creature, and therefore of limited powers and attainments.

Whatever improvements he made in moral excellency, *viz.* in piety, integrity and benevolence, in the difficult ſcenes and trials through

through which he paſſed, during his mortal ſtate, and we have reaſon to believe they were far beyond what any others of the human race ever acquired, there muſt ſtill be room for greater in an endleſs progreſſion, in his devout and delightful endeavours, in that other world, to know more of, and to copy after, *the infinitely holy, and all-perfect Being*; between whom, and the moſt exalted of his creatures, though they ſhall be ever growing in knowlege and virtue, and goodneſs, the diſtance will ſtill be infinite, as when they firſt ſet out in their career.

Thoſe diſcoveries of that exquiſite ſymmetry, and art, with which every thing in the world of nature is made, and adjuſted; the moſt wonderful ſimplicity, in the little that mankind have hitherto been able to trace, of thoſe laws, by which the whole ſyſtem of viſible orbs around us, in one of which we have our habitation, is ſupported and governed, *preſcribed even to hours, minutes, moments*, and adapted at the ſame time to the beſt ends, and to general happineſs: theſe views of the infinite, benevolent artiſt,

which

which ſanctified the mind of *Boyle*, which led *Newton* to ſee and adore HIM preſent every where; which filled the heart of the Swediſh philoſopher *(o)* with continual raptures of devout admiration, whilſt, with immenſe

(o) The devotional turn of Dr. *Linnæus's* mind, void of all ſuperſtition, and truly rational, is ſeen throughout all his writings, where it could naturally have a place. I give a little ſpecimen of it from the concluſion of an oration which he ſpoke at Upſal, in 1741, when he was admitted to the royal and ordinary profeſſion of phyſic.

Firſt, to thee, o omnipotent God, I humbly offer up my thankſgiving, for the immenſe benefits that have been heaped upon me, through thy gracious protection and providence.

Thou, from my youth upwards, haſt ſo led me by thy hand, haſt ſo directed my footſteps, that I have grown up in the ſimplicity and innocence of life, and in the moſt ardent purſuit after knowlege.

I give thee thanks that thou haſt preſerved me in all my journies, through my native and foreign countries, amidſt ſo many dangers, that ſurrounded me on every ſide.

That in the reſt of my life, amidſt the heavieſt burdens of poverty and other inconveniencies, thou waſt always preſent to ſupport me with thy almighty aſſiſtance.

Laſtly, that amidſt ſo many viciſſitudes of fortune, to which I have been expoſed, amongſt all the goods and evils, the joyful and gloomy, the pleaſing and diſagreeable circumſtances of life, thou endowedſt me with an equal, conſtant, manly, and ſuperior ſpirit on every occaſion.

immenſe labour, in paths untrodden before, he ſurveyed the undeſcribeable art and goodneſs, ſcattered with vaſt profuſion through the vegetable, foſſil and animal worlds, which he was raiſed up to record and illuſtrate, and alſo to make diſciples, who ſhould carry on the execution of his plan: theſe views, he ſays, of the great creator, which, the holy Jeſus's nobler office and employment, in laying a foundation for reſcuing mankind from the chains and miſeries of vice and ignorance, and bringing them to virtue and immortality, would not allow him leiſure to ſtudy and contemplate here, will furniſh him with new and unceaſing ſongs of praiſe and adoration.

We cannot refrain, at ſome hours, from thus making conjectures concerning a character we ſo much honour, and to whom we are ſo much indebted, and his employment in that other world, though we muſt neceſſarily babble in a great meaſure, like children, upon a circumſtance ſo much at preſent beyond us. One thing however we may be certain of, with reſpect to the place of our future deſtination, of thoſe among

among us who ſhall be ſo happy as to approve ourſelves here to our maker; that if, upon creatures ſuch as we are, in their beginning imperfect ſtate, ſuch a world as this has been beſtowed, furniſhed with ſuch a laviſh abundance of things delightful and agreeable to every ſenſe; with ſo much beauty, variety and uſefulneſs in all its parts, that the labours and ingenuity of men, for ſo many thouſand years that they have been placed upon it, have diſcovered only ſo much as ſhews that infinitely more yet remains to be brought to light: what may not be expected from the ſame munificent hand, when thoſe creatures ſhall, by his favour to them, have been made more perfect, and worthy of his regard!

SECTION X.

The ſufficiency of Chriſt for his office of teacher and ſaviour of the world, does not depend upon his miraculous conception. Dr. Prieſtley's

ley's *reaſons for his opinion concerning it. How the queſtion is to be decided.*

ONE of the charges brought againſt Dr. Prieſtley by Dr. Horne, in your names, is, that he looks upon Chriſt as a mere man, born like other men, the ſon of Joſeph and Mary; thereby denying his miraculous conception.

Now, whether our Lord was the ſon of Joſeph and Mary in the ordinary way of propagation of the human race, or the ſon of Mary only, by the operation of the extraordinary power of God, is in itſelf an indifferent matter. In one way, as well as in the other, he would be equally fitted for the purpoſes of his divine miſſion, and equally to be honoured. For there is no merit or real worth in being born in ſuch an extraordinary way, any more than in being born of a rich and noble family, rather than that of a beggar.

There is however no preſumption againſt a miracle of this kind, to ſerve the purpoſes of divine providence at that time. And one obvious uſe of it may ſeem to have been the ſecuring a proper attention in Joſeph and Mary to the pious and virtuous education

of

of the child: which was a thing of vaſt conſequence.

But it was not a miracle of ſuch a kind as to be alleged in proof of our Lord's divine miſſion; and therefore is never mentioned as ſuch. And this, together with the delicate circumſtances of the fact, may have been the cauſe of its being ſeldom talked of, and not much known, during our Lord's miniſtry, and in the time of his apoſtles.

As to the abſurdities of the fathers, as they are called, upon this ſubject, in the following times, they ſerve to ſhew the folly of the men, but do not invalidate the fact itſelf.

The point then in queſtion ſeems to be, what ſay the ſcriptures?

Dr. Prieſtley, after a very ſerious examination, and laying the reſult of it, and his arguments, before the public, is perſuaded, that the beginning of Matthew's, and of Luke's goſpels, which treat of the miraculous conception, do not contain a conſiſtent account of things, and alſo have not equal external evidence of teſtimony for their having been compoſed by Matthew

and Luke, as have the other parts of their goſpel-hiſtory. Other perſons acknowlege theſe to be difficulties in reconciling the narratives; but do not think thoſe difficulties of ſufficient force to counterbalance and ſet aſide the poſitive evidence, which appears to them to remain for their authenticity, after all deductions made. You, who are able, are to form your own judgments. It is of no conſequence to us as chriſtians, what is the deciſion, any farther than as one at leaſt of the evangeliſts has delivered a peremptory account of the fact, it is deſirable to have ſatisfaction concerning it. There muſt be a freedom in diſcuſſing doubtful points in hiſtory, ſacred or profane, to come at the truth; in the ſame manner as in inquiries on natural ſubjects, you make many experiments that fail, before you arrive at the *experimentum crucis*. If any one can ſolve Dr. Prieſtley's doubts, and reſtore the credit of the hiſtory in his mind, no one will be more ready to retract what he has advanced. And if the miraculous conception has been the invention of ſome early over-zealous chriſtians to do honour to Chriſt, when this is made

made to appear, and ſatisfactory evidence obtained how it was adopted or foiſted into the ſacred code, in any degree like that which we ſee of the ſpuriouſneſs of the text of the *three witneſſes*, 1 John. v. 7. all judicious chriſtians will readily give it up.

SECTION XI.

Chriſt's ſhedding of his blood, how to be underſtood. Sacrifices, their origin, and intent. Nothing done by Chriſt to atone for mens' ſins, or to make God more favourable and propitious than he was before. Repentance is all that is neceſſary to recommend ſinners to the divine mercy and favour. Chriſt's interceſſion, what intended by it.

VERY much diſſatisfied with the explication of the apoſtle Paul's language of Chriſt *entering into heaven by his blood*, given in the ſequel to the apology for reſigning the living of Catterick, p. 90, as ſignifying only his meritorious obedience unto death, which

gave him admiſſion there and favour with God: Dr. Horne thus expreſſes himſelf upon it. 'But is this the parallel intended 'by the apoſtle to the caſe of *the high-* 'priest, who *entered not without blood, which* 'he offered for himſelf and the ſins of the 'people? Muſt not *this man* (Chriſt) as the 'apoſtle himſelf argues, *have ſomething alſo* 'to OFFER? And did he not therefore *offer* 'his own blood for the ſins of the people? '(himſelf he had none). He did; and the 'apoſtle by the parallel meant to ſay that 'he did: he actually does ſay ſo. But Dr. 'Prieſtley and Mr. Lindſey ſay, there 'neither was nor could be any ſuch thing. 'Their reaſon tells them, there was no 'atonement by the blood of Chriſt; and 'their conſciences, as we are to ſuppoſe, 'tell them, they need none.' Undergraduate's letter to Dr. Prieſtley, p. 42, 43.

Perſons who have long been in the habit of impoſing on themſelves by the uſe of figurative terms of ſcripture in the groſs, as if there was ſome great myſtery contained in them, may thus talk crudely of Chriſt *offering his blood:* but you, who are learning

from

from your inſtructors, and from the excellent Locke on the human underſtanding, to analyze the proper meaning of words in the authors you read, would not have ſat down ſo contented, but would have tried, if ſome more light into the matter was not to be attained.

You would have conſidered, that a man's *entering into heaven by his blood*, cannot be taken literally. *Entering into heaven*, in the caſe of Chriſt, you would have found to have been, his being tranſlated from this earth, after having been raiſed from the dead in three days, to a ſtate of high favour with God, and the poſſeſſion of immortal life, by the divine power.

You would have next inquired, how could this be effected by his blood, by ſhedding or offering his blood? Blood itſelf, the red fluid, is a thing of no moral value. But blood being the life of man, the ſhedding of it, or voluntary giving up of life, may be praiſe worthy, according to the motives influencing to it.

What was there then, you would have proceeded to aſk, in Chriſt ſhedding his

blood, or voluntarily parting with his life, which was ſo acceptable to the Divine Being, and procured him ſuch honourable diſtinction, not only for himſelf to *enter into heaven*, as now explained; but alſo to be the means of drawing others thither after him, *to obtain (p)* ETERNAL *redemption for us*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks in the ſame place?

The ſcriptures you would farther perceive, inform us, that it was Chriſt's zeal, and labours, and fortitude, in preaching the truth,

(p) Redemption is the recovery of a thing by purchaſe or price of ſome kind or other, as men were redeemed or delivered from ſlavery, in antient times, by money paid down for them. Hence the word is transferred to ſignify a redemption or deliverance of any kind, or procured in any other way. Thus the Divine Being is called the redeemer of the Iſraelites, in bringing them out of ſlavery in Egypt; and Moſes is alſo ſaid to be their redeemer, as he was the divine inſtrument employed in it. And thus Chriſt is our redeemer, in being ſent and employed by almighty God, to deliver mankind from their ſins and the fatal conſequences of them, if perſiſted in. The means uſed by Chriſt were the doctrine and powerful motives of the goſpel, to which he gave atteſtation as coming from God, by dying or ſhedding his blood in its defence. The redemption of the world therefore by Chriſt, is their deliverance from ſin, and reſtoration to the divine favour for ever by the means and motives of the goſpel.

truth, in fulfilling and executing his truſt from God, and at laſt willingly giving himſelf up to death in confirmation of that doctrine which was of moſt unſpeakable benefit to mankind, that gave him ſuch favour in the ſight of the heavenly father. In one place, after having deſcribed himſelf as *the good ſhepherd*; who took care of his flock; and expoſed his life for it, he remarks: *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again.* John x. 17; and the apoſtle ſays, *he became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him,* &c. Thus then he obtained eternal redemption or deliverance for us. For his eminent virtue and obedience he was honoured with being made the firſt and chief inſtrument of delivering men from a ſtate of ſin and death, and bringing them to virtue and eternal felicity.

That Dr. Horne ſhould expreſs an extreme aſtoniſhment at this interpretation of the ſcripture-language of the blood of Chriſt, is not difficult to be accounted for from his early impreſſions and prejudices, and by

his having been taught to conſider the ſhedding of the blood of animals and the ſacrifices in the Old Teſtament, as methods of appeaſing the wrath and diſpleaſure of God for the ſins of men, originally inſtituted with a reference to the future ſacrifice and death of Chriſt, who alone was held able to make ſatisfaction for the actual tranſgreſſions of men, and for original ſin, *(q)* the ſin of our firſt parents, in the guilt of which our whole race are ſuppoſed to be involved.

Thus the dark heathen idea (for no other could be its origin) of appeaſing the wrath of their falſe gods, commonly men deified, by the blood of animals, and oftentimes by human victims, has been applied by chriſtians to the moſt merciful God; as if nothing leſs than the death of Chriſt, ſuppoſed to be a being equal to himſelf, could interpoſe effectually, ſo as to diſpoſe him to pardon the ſinner.

(q) Chriſt, very God, and very man, truly ſuffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a ſacrifice, not only for original guilt, but alſo for actual ſins of men. Article ii. of the church of England. See alſo Art. ix. xxxi.

But by examining the ſcriptures for yourſelves, you will learn, that whatever was the origin of ſacrifices, as a religious rite; whether of mere human invention, or of divine ſuggeſtion ſuited to the groſs infant ſtate of the world; they were nothing more than ways of expreſſing by ſymbols, or outward ſigns, mens ſentiments and reverential regards for the almighty being, who made them, and on whom they depended for every thing; either in intreating pardon for their offences, or begging the continuance of his bleſſings and manifold goodneſs to them, and giving thanks for it.

No value is at any time put upon ſacrifices, in the ſcriptures, but as they were ſignificant of and accompanied with theſe becoming, correſpondent, penitent and devout tempers of mind. This is their conſtant language. See Iſaiah i. to name one inſtance only. The ſacrifice which alone could render the ſinner acceptable to God, was not a bleeding victim, but *a broken and contrite heart.* So ſaid David (Pſ. li.) when labouring under the guilt of crimes of the firſt magnitude, murder and adultery.

adultery. He had no recourſe to ſacrifice, but to repentance, to wipe it away.

Moſes, the divine lawgiver of the Iſraelites, never teaches, that the ſacrifices, which he preſcribed to them, were types of, prefigured, or had any reference to the death of Chriſt. This application ingenious men have ſince invented for him. But he injoins them as religious ceremonies, or ways of worſhip, of divine appointment, to keep them from idolatry, and in the worſhip of Jehovah their God, the only living and true God, and in a juſt obedience to his laws.

He never informs them, that the ſacrifices, or any part of the ritual he ordained, could waſh away moral guilt: no, not even that ſacrifice which was offered on their annual day of atonement. Their rites and ſacrifices were of avail no farther, than to compenſate for their breach and neglect of their ceremonial law.

The apoſtle, Heb. x. 4. thus ſpeaks concerning the ſacrifice on their great day of atonement. *It is not poſſible, that the blood of bulls and goats ſhould take away ſin.* And ix. 13, 14. *If the blood of bulls and of goats,*

and

and the aſhes of an heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh; i. e. being ſprinkled on thoſe who were under ceremonial uncleanneſs, removed thoſe legal impurities which were a bar to their attendance on the public worſhip: *how much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal ſpirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works to ſerve the living God?* i. e. how much more ſhall that full aſſurance which you have of the pardon of your ſins, and of the divine favour for ever, confirmed by the blood, or death of Chriſt in atteſtation of it, be effectual to reclaim and recover the ſinner to the ſincere obedience of God's laws.

The greater part of chriſtians, for want of a little light into this ſubject, have their minds ſorely bewildered with the ſcripture-phraſes, *redeemed, ſaved, waſhed, by the blood of Chriſt*, &c. &c. It will be your buſineſs, and a high ſatisfaction to thoſe among you who are intended for the ſacred miniſtry, to free them from this perplexity; for which, what has been now remarked, will furniſh you with an eaſy clue. When,

for

for inſtance, Rev. i. 2. Chriſt is ſaid to *have loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*; you will ſatisfy them, that all that is intended by this figurative language, is; that Chriſt was willing to die for our ſakes (as we are alſo to be ready to die, 1 John iii. 16, for each others good), that by that holy doctrine, which he ſealed with his blood or by his death, we might be led to ceaſe from evil, and to become holy and good.

So 1 John i. 7, we are told, *the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.* Nothing can cleanſe us from ſin, but what brings the ſinner to forſake it. And the doctrine and motives of the goſpel confirmed by the blood or death of Chriſt, are moſt efficacious to this end.

You will tell them moreover, that the reaſon why the New Teſtament writers adopt this way of ſpeaking, was merely in alluſion to their antient religion, which conſiſted much in ſacrifices, waſhings, &c. But they uſed it alſo, when ſpeaking of other things, and did not apply it ſolely to Chriſt.

So

So Rom. xii. 1. we are injoined to *offer our bodies a ſacrifice.* Phil. iv. 19. contributing to the ſupport of the goſpel, is held *a ſacrifice acceptable, well-pleaſing to God.* Heb. xiii. 15. prayer is called a *ſacrifice.* Now it is readily acknowleged, that there were none of them real ſacrifices. Neither was Chriſt's death a real ſacrifice. But in the epiſtle to the Hebrews, where ſuch ſacrifical language is moſt of all uſed, the apoſtle was neceſſitated and called out as it were, to dwell upon the death of Chriſt, in language alluſive to their ſacrifices and hebrew ritual, as his deſign was to ſhew the ſuperiority of the chriſtian to the jewiſh diſpenſation, and to contraſt the real advantages received by the death of Chriſt with thoſe they ſuppoſed they had from their jewiſh ſacrifices, and to point out how far the former ſurpaſſed theſe. It was ſurely natural for our Saviour and his apoſtles, as jews, to ſpeak of the things of the goſpel in language borrowed from their former divine religion and worſhip. The great miſtake of many of Chriſt's followers has been, in interpreting literally, what

what they ſpake only in a figurative ſenſe, and by way of illuſtration.

Since Chriſt's voluntary death, or ſacrifice of himſelf, as the ſcriptures ſometimes term it, was thus nothing more than an act of obedience to God, in atteſtation and confirmation of his divine miſſion and doctrine, by which mankind were to be ſaved, or attain eternal life; you will perceive that it hence follows, that there is no ground for what is called his *(f)* atonement, or making ſatisfaction for the ſins of men by his death, by pacifying the wrath and

(f) It is remarkable, that the word, *atonement*, is never found in the New Teſtament but once, and there it is manifeſtly a miſtranſlation, Rom. v. 11. *And not only ſo, but we alſo joy in God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have now received the atonement.* Upon which one well remarks; 'I cannot imagine what ſhould induce our tranſ-'lators to render καταλλαγη by *atonement*, when they render 'the verb καταλλασσω by *reconciling* in the foregoing verſe, 'and in all other places; namely, 1 Cor. vii. 11. 2 Cor. 'v. 18, 19, 20, and καταλλαγη in all other places by *recon-'ciliation*, Rom. xi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 18. 19.' Taylor on Romans.

and diſpleaſure of God, as ſome would have it; or, as others, by making reparation for the diſhonour done to the divine law by ſin, in order that the Almighty might pardon it conſiſtently with his juſtice. His death in the cauſe of God and his truth, is a moſt powerful means and motive to bring ſinners to repentance, but can have no effect upon the Divine Being to change or make him better diſpoſed towards us, or to ſet him at liberty to forgive men, which he otherwiſe could not have done.

That Chriſt did nothing by his death, or in any other way, to render God kind and merciful to ſinners; or rather, that God is of his own accord diſpoſed to forgive men their ſins, without Chriſt or any other perſon interpoſing or interfering, and without any other condition than the ſinner's repentance, you find declared by the almighty himſelf, continually and expreſsly in the Old Teſtament, and never after contradicted in the New.

And the LORD *proclaimed, The* LORD, *the* LORD *God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering,*

ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs, and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *And forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee, and all their tranſgreſſions wherein they have tranſgreſſed againſt thee:—for they be thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughteſt forth out of Egypt, from the midſt of the furnace of iron.* Kings viii. 50, 51. *Seek ye the* LORD, *while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the* LORD, *and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Iſ. lv. 6, 7. *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.* Ez. xviii. 27.

From theſe declarations, which contain the conſtant uniform ſenſe of the Old Teſtament, it appears, that God would have forgiven men their ſins, if Chriſt's death had

had never happened; without any regard had to him. *(g)*.

Hence it follows, that there is no ground in ſcripture for the doctrine entertained by many, that the repentance of the ſinner alone is not ſufficient of itſelf to reſtore him to the divine favour, without ſomething done by Chriſt to render God propitious to him. For if God was ſo graciouſly diſpoſed as to forgive the old world upon their forſaking their

(g) But here it may be objected. What then! wherein is the goſpel to be preferred to the law, if the forgiveneſs of ſins was by the latter equally with the former? What benefit have chriſtians beyond jews? I anſwer: the greateſt that is poſſible to be enjoyed. The Iſraelites were aſſured by Moſes and the prophets, that God would pardon their iniquities on their repentance. But then they were taught nothing further. It was not told them, that the pardoning mercy of God would extend itſelf to continue their exiſtence, and confer favours on them in a future world. They had no explicit revelation made of this. But that their being ſhould be continued, and they be made happy for ever, was a revelation reſerved for him, who alone brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel, 2 Tim. i. 10. This is indeed properly THE GOSPEL; and it was the notification of ſo great a bleſſing to us, of the race of the heathens, which drew from the apoſtles of Jeſus, that exclamation of devout wonder and praiſe, αρα γε και τοις εθνεσιν ο θεος την μετανοιαν εδωκεν εις ζωην· *Then hath God indeed granted unto the gentiles repentance unto life!* Acts xi. 18.

their evil doings, without any one's interpoſing in their behalf; there is no reaſon to think that any change has been made in the Divine Mind ſince, but that he is willing to receive the chriſtian to mercy as readily as the jew.

This moſt important doctrine of the efficacy of repentance alone on the part of the ſinner, as ſufficient to recommend him to pardon with God, without any intereſt or interference of Chriſt, or of any other perſon, is confirmed by Chriſt himſelf.

Be ye therefore merciful, ſays he, *as your Father alſo is merciful*, Luke vi. 36. teaching thereby that the heavenly Father, is of himſelf moſt freely diſpoſed to forgive us; very contrary to what ſome aſſert, that he will ſhew no mercy, unleſs the whole debt of obedience be paid by ourſelves, or by another for us.

In the prayer he taught, Matth. vi. 12. 14, 15. we are encouraged to expect an intire forgiveneſs at the hands of our heavenly Father, if we ourſelves are penitent, and forgiving towards our brethren; without any other requiſite or condition.

But

But above all, the beautiful and affecting parable of the prodigal ſon, Luke xv. delivered by our Lord, is moſt deciſive, that in his eſtimate, repentance is all the atonement or ſatisfaction for the breach of his laws, which our heavenly Father requires, to reſtore us to his favour.

The doctrine of his apoſtles on this head, is the ſame with that of their divine maſter. It is never declared by them, that Chriſt did any thing to reconcile God to men, but to reconcile men to God. Men were alienated, turned away from God by their ſins: and only on that account, and till they forſook them, God was turned away from them.

You may then conclude, by the teſtimony of Moſes, and all the antient prophets and and of Chriſt himſelf, that, if you forſake your ſins and turn to God, *you have no need of Chriſt, or of any one, as a prieſt or interceſſor, to plead your cauſe, and to reconcile your Maker to you, to diſpoſe him to ſhew mercy and to forgive you.* For he is, and ever has been, of his own accord, without any

one's interfering, favourable and propitious to his penitent creatures.

So directly contrary, therefore to this, cannot be the meaning of that paſſage, (cited in the Undergraduate's Letter, p. 30.) Heb. vii. 24, 25; where St. Paul ſays of Chriſt, *this man, becauſe he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable prieſthood. Wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them*; and upon which Dr. Horne there complains, and remonſtrates to Dr. Prieſtley, 'We are now 'to be deprived of this moſt important and 'moſt comfortable doctrine, for ſuch, Sir, 'we have always been taught to eſteem it, 'and ſuch indeed it inſtantly and unavoida-'bly beſpeaks itſelf to our minds, namely, 'that we have an advocate and interceſſor 'on high with the Father.'

This refers to what had been obſerved by me in a former work, and is mentioned before, which Dr. Horne thus ſums up, and remarks upon it, as ſomething very monſtrous.

'The prieſthood of Jeſus Chriſt no real part of his character nor needful to be attend-

ed

ed to by his followers! *If this do not open the eyes of mankind, to ſee what is coming amongſt us, they muſt continue for ever cloſed.*'

I have, notwithſtanding, a good hope, that you will think lightly of the alarm which this well meaning but miſtaken perſon would ſpread upon this occaſion; and that you are ſatisfied from what has been ſaid above, that it was incidentally, and merely in reference to the opinions of the jews, to whom he was writing, that St. Paul ſtiles our Saviour a prieſt, and ſpeaks of his prieſthood, without any thing of what Dr. Horne imagines to be intended by, and would include under, that term.

That the apoſtle could intend nothing of the kind thereby, may I not ſay, has juſt now been demonſtrated to you, in the proofs laid before you from the ſcriptures, that mankind, that chriſtians, ſtand not in need of Chriſt, *(b)* or of any one, to go between them

(b) 'I am apt vehemently to ſuſpect, that the prayers of 'our church, frequently concluding, through, or for the ſake 'of Jeſus Chriſt, gives an idea to many perſons, that God 'has no immediate regard for us at all, but beſtows his 'bleſſings purely to gratify his Son, upon thoſe to whom

them and their Maker, and to do any thing to make ſatisfaction for their ſins, and reconcile them to him: for that he is always, of his own free goodneſs, diſpoſed to receive his offending creatures to his mercy, upon their repentance, without Chriſt's, or any other perſon's interference, in their behalf.

Nor did the apoſtle deſign to declare any ſuch interpoſition of Jeſus Chriſt, when he here ſpeaks of his making interceſſion for us. And though Dr. Horne would intimate, that you are not contented with the reaſons given formerly for its not meaning any thing of the kind, I hope you will ſee ſomething worthy of your attention in what follows, in confirmation of that interpretation, and that it will be approved by you.

The word, εντυγχανω, which we render to *interccde*, to make *interceſſion*, is not found in the lxx. In its original root, it ſignifies, to *meet*

'*he* has happily taken a liking: and that by the uſe of that 'name, we may move him to do a thing he was indifferent 'to before.' Mr. Tucker's Light of nature purſued, vol. viii. p. 343. N. B. There is no precept in the New Teſtament for praying or aſking any thing of God *for Chriſt's ſake*: nor any example of it. Eph. iv. 32. is a wrong tranſlation.

meet with, to *light upon* any one: whence it has theſe derived ſenſes given it, to *apply* to, to *intreat*, *ſolicit*, to *manage anothers buſineſs*, *take care* of *his intereſts*, *&c.*

Now a due attention to the paſſage before us, will lead us to ſee, what we are to underſtand by Chriſt's interceding for us. Heb. vii. 25. It is ſaid *wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him; ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.*

To *come to God by Chriſt*, is, to be Chriſt's true diſciple.

To *ſave*, or *ſave to the uttermoſt*, is to bring men to the poſſeſſion of eternal life; which is to be accompliſhed by giving them the means of obtaining it.

Now it is only by Chriſt in the goſpel, that the promiſe of eternal life is made to men, the knowlege of the way to it, and the means of attaining it.

So that the means of being ſaved are, the knowlege of the goſpel, and the ſuperior motives, excitements and aſſurances it affords, to lead men from vice and the world, to the practice of holineſs and all virtue;

without which none can be ſaved, or enter into eternal life.

As to what immediately follows, *viz. ſeeing that he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* This *ever living* ſeems to be ſpoken only with reference to, and in contraſt with the jewiſh high prieſts, who died one after another; whereas, though Chriſt died, he was not left in the ſtate of the dead, but made alive again, and always ready to do what became him. And what is implied in his *ever living to make interceſſion*, or rather, *to manage their intereſts, to aſſiſt them*, is, that the happy effects of the goſpel ſhould never ceaſe.

Hence then we gather, that *Chriſt's interceſſion*, ſignifies, *(i)* or conſiſts in, the ſupplying

(i) Many perſons will be forward to condemn it, as a thing quite wrong and arbitrary, to give this conſtruction of the term *interceſſion*; being impoſed upon by the word, in engliſh, always bearing the ſenſe of aſſiſting another by prayer and intreaties. But it was ſhewn above, that this is only one derived ſenſe of the word in the original, and that it may no leſs properly ſignify to manage mens affairs with a third perſon or aſſiſt them in other ways. As I truſt, that hereafter it will be made to appear, that Chriſt's *ſitting*

at

ſupplying of mankind with the means of ſalvation, or of obtaining eternal life.

This he firſt began in his life time, by his preachings, and inſtructions to his apoſtles.

After he left the world, the work was continued and carried on by the gifts of the holy ſpirit, or of a divine power, which he ſent, or which God ſent according to Chriſt's promiſe, to his apoſtles and firſt followers; by which they were enabled to preach the truth, i. e. the goſpel they had heard from him, with wonderful effect and ſucceſs.

And

at the right hand of God, ſignifies the diſplay of the divine extraordinary power that was made in his favour, or for the effectual propagation of the goſpel in the apoſtolic age; the *making interceſſion* there mentioned, or as it rather ſhould be tranſlated, the *managing their affairs*, muſt refer to the gifts of the ſpirit or of a divine power beſtowed upon his followers, during that period. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo manageth our affairs.* And if, in any paſſages of ſcripture, Chriſt is ſaid to intercede for us, or to manage our intereſts with God, ſince the apoſtolic age, when extraordinary divine gifts were withdrawn; it muſt refer to the written goſpel, the divine inſtructions communicated by Chriſt, and faithfully handed down and ſecured to us by the ordinary means of providence; as he that does any thing by another perſon or thing, may be ſaid to do it himſelf.

And Chriſt's interceſſion, in this ſenſe of the word, has continued ever ſince and now ſubſiſts in thoſe his inſtructions, which we very properly ſtile the word of God, as he received it by inſpiration from him; which alone teach the way to eternal life, and which have been faithfully handed down to us, written and recorded by his apoſtles and apoſtolic men, to our times; and by which ſinners are continually converted, and mankind are taught the way of ſalvation, i. e. of becoming happy for ever in a future world.

But although Chriſt's being called an advocate, (*k*) or interceſſor, does not imply any perſonal

(*k*) Under the title of *advocate*, παρακλητος, which is not ſo well tranſlated *comforter*, our Saviour characterizes and perſonifies the *holy ſpirit*, (John xiv. 16, &c.) or the divine extraordinary powers, which he promiſed on the part of God ſhould be ſent to his diſciples. Theſe divine gifts accordingly were ſent, and were their advocate, pleading their cauſe, the cauſe of the goſpel, moſt effectually; by giving them credit with thoſe to whom they preached, and influencing them to receive it.

The ſame title, John gives his divine maſter, 1 John ii. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt, the righteous.*

By

perſonal interference, by which he does any thing to reconcile us to God and ſave us from his diſpleaſure: yet it is a thing not to be doubted, but he that prays for, and in that ſenſe of the word, intercedes for us, in the heavenly world where he now is. He that was ſo true a friend, and loved us ſo as to give up his life to promote our happineſs, and whom we have a promiſe of being with hereafter for ever, cannot but be ardently intereſted for us, and at proper ſeaſons offer up his prayer to God for his brethren of mankind.

But then there is no encouragement given in the ſcriptures, for any particular dependence upon, or expectation from his prayers, any more than the jews might have upon thoſe

By taking this language in the literal ſenſe, many poſſeſs themſelves with a notion, that Chriſt is continually pleading for mankind before God; as if the almighty and merciful needed to be ſtunn'd as it were with repeated petitions, or Chriſt had no other employment. But the real meaning of the expreſſion, which is borrowed from human things, is to inform us, that by Chriſt and his goſpel, his followers are as much aſſured of the favour of God for ever upon their forſaking their ſins, as if they had the moſt powerful advocate in heaven perpetually pleading for them.

thoſe of the prophet Elijah, who they knew would carry along with him his concern for them into the other world, into which he was taken up alive, as Chriſt was.

Thoſe however, who inſiſt ſo much on the office and employment of Chriſt, in praying and interceding for mankind, do not conſider, that it neceſſarily implies his being a dependent creature. For it cannot, without impiety, be ſuppoſed, that God ſhould pray for any thing, to any one. And the doctrine of the two natures of Chriſt, of his being a mortal man, and alſo the eternal God, and of his praying, as man only, in his human nature, and therefore praying to himſelf in his divine nature, is a metaphyſical ſubtlety, chimera, and contradiction, which rational beings ſhould long ago have been aſhamed of and abandoned.

You have now ſeen, that the Divine Being is always of himſelf diſpoſed to ſhew mercy to his penitent creatures, that their repentance alone is ſufficient to recommend them to his favour, without Chriſt or any one interpoſing in their behalf; and that the

ſcriptures

ſcriptures are miſinterpreted and miſrepreſented when it is concluded that Chriſt did any thing to reconcile God, or to make him more kindly diſpoſed to us, from his being therein ſtiled our high prieſt, advocate, interceſſor, or a ſacrifice for ſin: theſe being all of them figurative expreſſions, applied to Chriſt, and alluding to religious rites and ceremonies, to which the jews and other nations, to whom the ſacred writers addreſſed themſelves, had been accuſtomed, and are to be explained in the manner you have ſeen.

SECTION XII.

The late Bp. Butler's *great error, that repentance alone is not ſufficient to obtain pardon of God, without the interpoſition of Jeſus Chriſt. The melancholy deſcription given by him of the divine government. The ſources of his unhappy miſtake. His miſrepreſentations of the world we live in, and its inhabitants. God, and the world, men and their expectations hereafter, far better than his ſyſtem would make them.*

THERE is an author of great and deſerved reſpect,

reſpect, biſhop Butler, whoſe 'Analogy of religion, natural and revealed', was put into the hands of youth in the univerſity, in my time, and I am told is ſtill much read. The ſerioufneſs of his ſpirit, and his deep concern for piety and virtue cannot be too much commended, and I profeſs myſelf to owe many obligations to him on theſe accounts. But as he takes a direct contrary road to what we have ſeen the ſcripture to point out, upon this ſubject, and through ignorance, charges the divine adminiſtration over us with not being ſo merciful and gracious as it really is, and fills the mind with dark ſuſpicions of the Divine Being himſelf being under ſome ſtrange conſtraints; I hold it of conſequence to point out to you his miſtakes, leſt his authority ſhould prejudice you againſt the truth.

P. 295. This author ſays, 'Revelation 'teacheth us, that the rules of divine go-'vernment are ſuch as not to admit of par-'don, immediately, and directly upon re-'pentance, or by the ſole efficacy of it. 'And a little after he adds, p. 296. Chriſt

'interpoſed

'interpoſed in ſuch a manner, as was neceſ-
'ſary and effectual to prevent that execution
'of juſtice upon ſinners, which God had
'appointed ſhould otherwiſe have been exe-
'cuted upon them; or in ſuch a manner,
'as to prevent that puniſhment from actu-
'ally following, which, according to the
'general laws of divine government, muſt
'have followed the ſins of the world, had it
'not been for ſuch an interpoſition.'

REMARKS.

1. It is allowed, that repentance will not prevent *preſent* ſufferings in conſequence of paſt ſins; it will not ſecure a man from the diſeaſes conſequent upon venereal exceſſes, for inſtance, or immoderate drinking. But what ground has our author to conclude, that it will not ſecure the man from future ſufferings. Surely the concluſion ought to have been quite the contrary; that ſince the ſufferings had accompliſhed the end deſigned by them, in making the man ceaſe from vice and become virtuous, therefore they would not continue in the next ſtate, be-

cauſe

cauſe there would be no occaſion for them. The analogy, or reſemblance in the two caſes is by this circumſtance quite altered.

2. What a dreadful picture does he draw of the moſt merciful God? According to him, HE is bound by certain laws and rules of his government, as the heathens held Jupiter ſubject to fate, ſo that juſtice *muſt* be executed upon ſinners; HE *cannot* pardon them, unleſs ſome powerful interpoſition be made to prevent his laws having their blow at the ſinner, and puniſhing him. How happy is it, that the ſcripture teaches a different doctrine! One paſſage, cited by our author, ſpeak's the very reverſe of what he ſuppoſes intended by it, and repreſents the whole plan of our ſalvation and Chriſt's ſufferings, as contrived and appointed by the heavenly Father, out of love to mankind. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his beloved ſon, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* John iii. 16. The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are never repreſented in ſcripture as the cauſe of God's ſhewing mercy to ſinners; but as the effect and reſult of his mercy and goodneſs;

goodneſs; a kind expedient, deviſed by him, to bring men from their ſins to holineſs, and an immortal life.

3. There is a radical miſtake in this writer, but which is by no means peculiar to him, in his language concerning Chriſt; flowing indeed from his own perſuaſion, but a very wrong perſuaſion concerning him, as if he were equal to the Almighty, or ſome great independent being, in his talking ſo continually of *his interpoſition*, *his interpoſing* to procure the pardon of ſins, or to make repentance effectual, by what he did and ſuffered for men. But Chriſt ſpeaks with more humility of himſelf, and of the part he took in the ſalvation of mankind; and the ſcriptures uniformly teach, that he was God's ſervant in all he did, and acted altogether in obedience to him, and with a view to recommend himſelf to his favour; and that the principal thing that made him acceptable to God, was his love to his brethren of mankind, in being willing to die to promote their virtue and everlaſting happineſs.

But it may be of uſe to you, to point out

the ſource of biſhop Butler's errors, and impoſition upon himſelf and others, in his miſrepreſentations of the Divine Being, and of his government over mankind.

At the end of his chapter on the importance of chriſtianity, p. 234. he is very earneſt to impreſs upon his readers, 'the obligation of ſearching the ſcriptures, in order 'to ſee, *what the ſcheme of revelation really* 'is; *inſtead of determining beforehand, from* 'reaſon, *what the ſcheme of it muſt be.*' But unfortunately, he himſelf has fallen into this very error, throughout the whole of this, and the four following chapters of his work: not indeed by determining before *from reaſon*, but by determining before *from the articles and liturgy of the church of England*, what the ſcheme of religion *muſt be*, without ever properly ſearching the ſcriptures to ſee what it *really is*.

Giving an account of chriſtianity, p. 220, he ſays; 'It contains a revelation of a particular diſpenſation of providence carrying on by the Son and Spirit of God, for the recovery and ſalvation of mankind, who are repreſented, in ſcripture, to be in a ſtate

a ſtate of ruin. That in conſequence of this revelation being made, we are commanded *to be baptized*, not only *in the name of the Father* but alſo *of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt:* and other obligations of duty, unknown before, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt, are revealed. Now the importance of theſe duties may be judged of, by obſerving, that they ariſe, not from poſitive command merely; but alſo from the offices, which appear from ſcripture, to belong to thoſe divine perſons in the goſpel-diſpenſation; or, from the relations, which, we are there informed, they ſtand in to us. By reaſon is revealed the relation, which God the Father ſtands in to us. Hence ariſes the obligation of duty we are under to him. In ſcripture are revealed the relations, which the Son and Holy Spirit ſtand in to us. Hence ariſe the obligations of duty, which we are under to them.'

He proceeds afterwards in the next page 222, to ſay; 'The eſſence of natural religion may be ſaid to conſiſt in religious regards to GOD *the Father Almighty*; and the eſſence of re-

vealed religion, as 'diſtinguiſhed from natural, to conſiſt in religious regards to *the Son*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*.' He then goes on to ſpeak of the diſtinct offices of theſe two divine perſons, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and of the religious regards, or inward worſhip due to each, being equally obligatory upon chriſtians as the worſhip of God the Father. And p. 225, dwells upon the fatal conſequences, and the judicial puniſhments that will enſue, particularly, from not worſhiping Jeſus Chriſt, as God.

REMARKS.

1. You obſerve that biſhop Butler, gives no proof from the ſcriptures, that the Son, and Holy Spirit are each of them divine perſons, or Gods, except what is to be drawn from the form of baptiſm, Matt. xxviii. 19; which is a very ſandy foundation for the ſuperſtruction of *two new Gods and objects of worſhip* upon it. For many indeed have ſhewn, and it will appear in the courſe of this work, that nothing of the kind can be built upon it; and that all that is ſignified by it is, that perſons were to be initiated into a religion, which

which came from God, the Father of mankind, and was taught by Jeſus Chriſt his favoured and beloved creature and ſervant, and confirmed by his holy ſpirit, or the extraordinary divine power, which accompanied Jeſus and his apoſtles. Not to mention, that the apoſtles appear not to have laid any ſtreſs on this preciſe form of baptizing preſcribed in Matthew, ſince they uſually baptized in the name of Jeſus only.

2. After thus making *two new divine perſons, or Gods,* without any authority from the ſcriptures, the biſhop proceeds, as might be expected, of courſe, to talk of the duties to be paid to perſons in ſuch a ſituation, and ſtanding in ſuch a relation to us, the very ſame with that of God, the Father almighty; and pronounces that the ſame religious regards and inward worſhip are due to *them,* as to HIM.

This unqueſtionably is, and has been the doctrine and the practice of too many chriſtians, now and for many ages; but it was not ſo from the beginning; nor is it the doctrine of ſcripture, or the practice of holy men there recorded. For from the beginning to the end, the

bible knows only *one perſon*, who is the true and living God, nor ever ſpeaks of religious regards, or inward worſhip, to be paid to *any other perſon*. No one that I have heard or read of, has ever produced, from ſcripture, one example of prayer offered up to the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghoſt, as a divine perſon, or God. And the inſtances wherein worſhip has been *ſuppoſed* to be paid to Jeſus Chriſt, have been ſhewn, not to belong to him, or to conſiſt only in ſuch worſhip and reſpect, as is proper to be paid to a creature of ſuch excellence and moral worth.

3. You perceive to what a degree this learned man overlooks the ſcriptures, and impoſes upon himſelf: that he even makes the grand diſtinction and peculiarity of the goſpel, to conſiſt in the worſhip of theſe *two new divine perſons, and objects of religious worſhip*, whom no rational, unprejudiced reader, can find, either in the Old or New Teſtament. For one perſon, Jehovah, the Father, is there ſpoken of throughout as God alone; and no other beſide him is ever named, worſhiped, or recommended to be worſhiped,

ed, by Moſes and the prophets, or by Jeſus Chriſt.

4. Nay, he proceeds ſo far as to make a *new ſin*, unknown to the ſcriptures, like the pope of Rome's ſin of not faſting during the forty days of lent; and dwells upon the ſad conſequences and puniſhment that will follow hereafter, for not worſhiping Jeſus Chriſt as God. Surely he ought to have ſeen better to the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a doctrine on ſcripture-grounds, before he had dealt out judgments againſt thoſe who do not practice according to it. But he ſeems to have conſidered the bible in many reſpects, as a book, that was to be regulated and interpreted, according to the creeds and liturgy of the church of England.

5. You will obſerve the ſame prejudice to prevail throughout the biſhop's whole account of the chriſtian diſpenſation. Without examining into their real meaning, he brings a heap of paſſages of ſcripture, to prove Chriſt to have been a propitiatory ſacrifice; and intirely miſtaking the deſign of the epiſtle to the hebrews, he aſſerts the legal ſacrifices to be an alluſion to the great

and final atonement made by the blood of Chriſt, p. 298, &c. Whereas in fact, as you have ſeen, Chriſt was ſo far from *interpoſing in the redemption of the world*, as he ſpeaks, or offering himſelf as an *expiatory victim*, to make ſatisfaction to divine juſtice, or appeaſe the diſpleaſure of God, according to the heathen ideas with reſpect to their falſe Gods, a practice which biſhop Butler thinks to have been well founded, though ill directed; that the Divine Being, of his mere goodneſs, appointed him to die, that through the confirmation thereby given to the goſpel, he might be his inſtrument in bringing mankind to virtue and the happineſs he intended for them: to which our Lord dutifully ſubmitted, and with the moſt benevolent views for his fellow-creatures of mankind.

But then, Chriſt herein did no more than we and all his followers, are commanded to be ready to do, if called out to it. *Hereby perceive we love, becauſe he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*, 1 John iii. 16. He made not any ſatisfaction or atonement for ſin to God any

any more than other martyrs and ſufferers for the truth of the goſpel; for the heavenly Father neither needed nor required any. It is a diſhonour and diſparagement to his all-perfect character and goodneſs, and contrary as you have ſeen to his own expreſs declarations by his prophets, and by Jeſus Chriſt laſt of all, to imagine, that he is not always ready, of his own accord, without any one's interpoſition, to receive his creatures to favour, upon their repentance alone.

To illuſtrate the more this moſt important ſubject, I would propoſe to you the probable reaſon, as it appears to me, why pious, thoughtful men, ſuch as biſhop Butler, Dr. Price, and others, have fallen into, and adhered ſo fixedly to this gloomy, unſcriptural doctrine, that repentance alone is not ſufficient to reſtore ſinful mortals to the favour of their Maker.

This I aſcribe to their not keeping ſtrictly to the doctrine of ſcripture concerning the divine unity and the proper humanity of Chriſt,

Chriſt, there delivered, in the cleareſt characters, to all who come not to the reading of it, under a rooted and fixed contrary perſuaſion.

For, having taken up the notion, which was firſt brought in by heathen philoſophers, who embraced the goſpel; *i. e.* that Jeſus Chriſt is God, or the greateſt and moſt antient of beings, next to him; and finding the buſineſs and employment, however honourable, of bringing men off from their ſins, and making them virtuous and good, not a proper call for ſuch a Being as God, or one next to him, to deſcend for upon earth and to ſuffer and die; ſince this might as well or better be done by a man like themſelves, with proper authority from God, and exemplifying his doctrine in his own life and practice, which would be more to their level, and affect men the more: they therefore had recourſe to, and adopted that other heathen notion, of their falſe gods being angry with men for their ſins and neglect of them, and needing to be appeaſed with offerings and victims: and ſetting imagination to work, and miſconſtruing and miſapplying the figurative,

rative, ſacrifical, language of the New Teſtament, and particularly of the apoſtle Paul, as if it was to be taken literally, though a mere alluſion to the prevailing cuſtoms and worſhip, they *ſuppoſed* that there was ſome bar and obſtacle in heaven to be removed, ſome myſterious demand of divine juſtice to be ſatisfied, before ſin could be forgiven; that there was a ranſom or debt to be diſcharged, which no mortal could pay; and that it was neceſſary in order to this, that God himſelf ſhould ſuffer and die, or ſome great being almoſt equal to him, or mankind muſt be puniſhed, or periſh for ever.

So long as men are perſuaded, that there is ſuch an angry power above them, who is ſo inexorable and ſevere in his government, they can ſeldom think well of the world they live in, or that their Maker is ſo good as he really is.

Of this you ſee the moſt manifeſt effects in the deſcription which biſhop Butler gives of man's preſent ſtate; which he introduces with a ſuppoſition, the thought of which makes one tremble; but for which, happily, what-

whatever he imagined, there is no real foundation.

'Were we to ſuppoſe, ſays he, p. 297. 'the conſtitution of things to be ſuch, as 'that the whole creation muſt have periſh-'ed, had it not been for *ſomewhat*, which 'God had appointed ſhould be, in order to 'prevent that ruin: even this ſuppoſition 'would not be inconſiſtent, in any degree, 'with the moſt abſolutely perfect goodneſs. 'But ſtill it may be thought, that this whole 'manner of treating the ſubject before us, 'ſuppoſes mankind to be naturally in a very 'ſtrange ſtate. And truly ſo it does. But 'it is not chriſtianity, which has put us in-'to this ſtate. Whoever will conſider the 'manifold miſeries, and the extreme wick-'edneſs of the world: that the beſt have 'very great wrongneſſes within themſelves, 'which they complain of, and endeavour 'to amend; but that the generality grow 'more profligate and corrupt with age: that 'heathen moraliſts thought the preſent ſtate 'to be a ſtate of puniſhment: and, what 'might be added, that the earth our habi-'tation has the appearances of being a ruin:

who-

'whoever, I ſay, will conſider all theſe, 'and ſome other obvious things, will think 'he has little reaſon to object againſt the 'ſcripture-account, that mankind is in a 'ſtate of degradation." Analogy, &c. p. 297.

Surely this is an exhibition of the dark ſide of things, giving a partial and untrue account of our preſent ſtate. For if every thing wore the melancholy hue, this worthy man gives it, many would ſay, the ſooner a man were out of the ſyſtem the better. But it is not the fact; nor does Moſes in his account of the fall countenance him in it.

That divine lawgiver indeed gives a deſcription of our firſt parents' tranſgreſſion, and of the fatal conſequences of it, like a wiſe and good man, under ſuch images, as were ſuited to the groſs conceptions of men in that infancy of the world, and ſuch as he believed might beſt deter them in future from diſobeying the commands of their creator, upon whoſe favour their being and happineſs depended. But what he makes to be ſaid to Adam, *curſed is the ground for thy ſake; in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life*, ſeems a circumſtance

ſtance peculiar to our firſt progenitor, who would be ſtung with remorſe all his life for the part he had acted. We are not thence to conclude, as biſhop Butler ſeems to do, that all his poſterity were to live all their days in miſery.

What Adam's ſtate was before the fall, we have no grounds on which to build any thing certain. We have no reaſon however to believe, that it was an indolent and inactive one, ſince the divine command then was, to *repleniſh* and *ſubdue* the earth; which neceſſarily ſuppoſed they were to labour and toil. But labour is not miſery, but the contrary. And, notwithſtanding this threat, Moſes himſelf promiſes all manner of earthly enjoyments to his countrymen, if they ſerved and obeyed almighty God. And no nation, I believe, ever was, or could deſire to be happier than they were, at ſuch periods when they obſerved his laws.

Far, very far alſo is it from being a miſerable world, that we *now* live in, but very much the contrary; nor, I apprehend, has there ever been any the leaſt reaſon to call it ſo in general, however ſome individuals

viduals may have ſuffered much in it. But it is a misfortune to write of things from theory, to form a judgment of all mankind from temporary or local circumſtances, from looking only into hoſpitals, dungeons, or upon the objects that preſent themſelves to the eyes in the ſtreets of great cities; and not attending to the whole of the caſe, and counting the millions unſeen that are employed and happy. It ſhould be taken alſo into the account, that pain and ſuffering are ſalutary and uſeful, tending to preſerve health and life, and to rectify the moral frame, and lead to virtue: and virtue is happineſs here and hereafter.

Should there be found any, whoſe ſufferings far outweigh their enjoyments; you muſt not therefore arraign the goodneſs of their creator, or cenſure his government; but conſider, that all does not end here. Such inequalities may be rectified hereafter. Theſe caſes however are very few; as there are compenſations found in all conditions, which are unknown to the byſtander and ſpectator. We can be certain of no one's caſe but our own. And yet even here, we

are

are far from being fair calculators: for with ourſelves, a very ſhortlived fit of pain will make whole years of pleaſure forgotten.

For my own part, I am bound to ſay, that my condition has been moſt happy, from the beginning of my exiſtence to the preſent day. Happily preſerved from great calamities, I have not been exempt from hardſhips, reverſes, and ſickneſſes; but the kind hand of providence has been diſcernible in them all, leading to good by them. I have moſt particularly cauſe to ſpeak well of thoſe of my fellow-beings, whom I have been acquainted with, or among whom my lot has been caſt, and I would deſire no better company for ever, than thoſe I have known, and loved, and eſteemed, and heard, and read of; eſpecially, when diveſted more of all ſelfiſhneſs, and *terrene concretions*, as Edward Search calls them, which we expect, nay rather are perſuaded, will take place in our future progreſſive ſtate. Indeed was there to be no ſuch ſtate, and all was to end here, though ſo dark and abrupt a concluſion of the fair promiſing ſcene, is not credible, and would be wholly unaccountable,

countable, I muſt, for my part, take my leave, and depart, a well ſatisfied gueſt, *ſatur conviva recederem*; thankful that I had paſſed ſo many happy days, and lived, and ſeen, and experienced ſo much of the goodneſs of my creator, and been favoured with the knowlege of ſo many amiable and valuable characters among my ſpecies, though concerned to take a farewell for ever of the one and the other, and to know nothing any more.

Nor is the wickedneſs of the world, however much to be lamented, ſo extreme, as biſhop Butler repreſents it, in his gloomy picture. Was it ſuch in fact, much of the blame, I fear, would fall, where leaſt of all he would have wiſhed it, on the religion of Jeſus; and it might have been turned into a ſhrewd argument againſt its divine origin, which would have had great weight with many minds, *viz.* that it has been now near two thouſand years in the world, and ſo little good done by it.

But it is a groundleſs, though wholly unintentional aſperſion of divine providence

and the goſpel, the effect of a narrow mind, bound down to a religious ſyſtem, which would not ſuffer this good man to look about him, and ſee things as they really are, either in the word, or the works of the great creator.

All theſe melancholy ſurmiſes you will ſee diſſipated in a book that much deſerves your attention, for the large variety of curious and uſeful matter which it contains; but particularly for ſhewing, that religion and ſcience have been in a ſtate of progreſſive improvement from the beginning of things: which will contribute to put you in good humour with the world you live in, and make you love and adore its benign author and governor, and his wiſe and kind adminiſtration over you, and over all.

The book is intitled, 'Conſiderations on 'the theory of religion,' &c. by Edmund, Lord Bp. of Carliſle, the 7th edition, 1784. The author's character is finely touched by an able but no flattering hand, and I ſhall not digreſs from my purpoſe in holding it up to you.

"A long

"A long life, (ſays Mr. Archdeacon
'Paley, in the dedication of his Principles
'of moral and political philoſophy to the
'Bp. of Carliſle,) ſpent in the moſt inter-
'eſting of all human purſuits, the inveſtiga-
'tion of moral and religious truth, in con-
'ſtant and unwearied endeavours to advance
'the diſcovery, communication, and ſucceſs
'of both; a life ſo occupied, and arrived at
'that period which renders every life vener-
'able, commands reſpect by a title, which
'no virtuous mind will diſpute, which no
'mind ſenſible of the importance of theſe
'ſtudies to the ſupreme concernments of
'mankind will not rejoice to ſee acknow-
'leged. Whatever difference, or whatever
'oppoſition, ſome, who peruſe your lord-
'ſhip's writings, may perceive between their
'concluſions and your own, the good and
'wiſe of all perſuaſions will revere that in-
'duſtry, which has for its object the illuſ-
'tration or defence of our common chriſtia-
'nity. Your lordſhip's reſearches have never
'loſt ſight of one purpoſe, namely, to re-
'cover the ſimplicity of the goſpel from

'beneath that load of unauthorized additions, which the ignorance of ſome ages, 'and the learning of others, the ſuperſtition of weak and the craft of deſigning 'men, have (unhappily for its intereſt) 'heaped upon it. And this purpoſe, I am 'convinced, was dictated by the pureſt motive; by a firm, and, I think, a juſt opinion, *that whatever renders religion more 'rational, renders it more credible; that he, 'who, by a diligent and faithful examination 'of the original records, diſmiſſes from the 'ſyſtem one article, which contradicts the apprehenſion, the experience, or the reaſoning 'of mankind, does more towards recommending 'the belief, and, with the belief, the influence 'of chriſtianity, to the underſtandings and conſciences of ſerious inquirers, and through 'them to univerſal reception and authority, 'than can be effected by a thouſand contenders 'for creeds and ordinances of human eſtabliſhment.*'

Another inſtance brought by biſhop Butler of the conſequence of the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, is 'that the earth we live in 'has the appearance of being a ruin.'

Did

Did you not ſee whence it ariſes, you would wonder that ſuch a thought would enter into the mind of this pious and learned man; when the beauties of nature have been the theme of ſerious obſervers, and conſtant ſong of poets, through all ages; ſuch a canopy, ſo magnificently adorned, ſpread over our heads, by day and by night: each part of the globe moſt plentifully ſupplied for the accommodation of its various inhabitants, reptiles, beaſts, fiſhes, flies, fowls, up to man, with *(o)* goodneſs compleat as well as wiſdom. Every thing contrived, with an aſtoniſhing profuſion, moſt grateful and ſalutary to the ſenſes; and all made welcome to the feaſt, ſo it be partaken of with moderation, and thankſgiving to the magnificent donor.

What if you are forced to ſevere labour to procure theſe conveniences and delights?

(o) See pſalm cxlv, cxlvii, cxlviii, cl. It would ſeem hence as if the Iſraelites lived in a happier world, and under a better and more merciful God, than we chriſtians, if we compare theſe ſongs of holy joy in praiſe of the great creator, with the ſorrowful ideas which biſhop Butler would inculcate.

You are the happier for it. You could not be happy without it. *Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening*; is among the ſubjects of praiſe to the beneficent creator, in a hymn, famous for that admirable ſenſe and ſublime ſimplicity, which diſtinguiſh the ſacred penmen. Inſtead of a ruin then, this earth is a palace, moſt nobly and amply furniſhed, into which our maker has put us, and but too beautiful and good for creatures juſt crept into exiſtence, ſave only that it ſerves to diſplay his ſuperlative goodneſs, and to raiſe our expectations of what he has in reſerve for us, in our more improved ſtate, in a future world, whereever it is to be.

How much biſhop Butler's views of nature were darkened, and his mind warped and hurt by the unbenevolent religious ſyſtem he had embraced, you will gather from a remark which he makes, in his Analogy, &c. p. 146. 'Of the numerous ſeeds, ſays he, 'of vegetables, and bodies of animals, which 'are adapted, and put in the way to improve 'to ſuch a point, and ſtate of natural matu-

'rity

'rity and perfection, we do not ſee perhaps 'that one in a million actually does. For 'the greateſt part of them decay before they 'are improved to it; and appear to be abſo-'lutely deſtroyed. Yet no one, who does 'not deny all final cauſes, will deny, that 'thoſe ſeeds and bodies, which do attain to 'that point of maturity and perfection, an-'ſwer the end for which they were really 'deſigned by nature; and therefore that na-'ture deſigned them for ſuch perfection. 'And I cannot forbear adding, though it is 'not to the preſent purpoſe, that the ap-'pearance of ſuch an amazing waſte in na-'ture, with reſpect to theſe ſeeds and bodies, 'by foreign cauſes, is to us as unaccounta-'ble, as what is much more terrible, the 'preſent and future ruin of ſo many moral 'agents by themſelves, *i. e.* by vice.'

You would here reply, that thoſe millions of millions of inſects, that live but a day, or an hour, are happy during their exiſtence, and an argument of the goodneſs that gave it to them; and the infinite number of ſeeds, which are ſcattered far and wide and ſeem to

come to nothing, ſhew a laviſh generous profuſion that delights us. But it muſt have been a moſt melancholy turn of mind, as well as a very falſe way of reaſoning, that could lead a man hence to infer, that the like waſte and utter loſs may take place in the human ſpecies. Where is the analogy or reſemblance, to countenance the frightful concluſion? The one, a being, rational, and capable of virtuous improvement for ever, and therefore its extinction a real loſs in the creation: the others, not made for any farther exiſtence, or the ſubjects of any improvement. But this is only one, among many inſtances, wherein this author has been miſled by *fancying* analogies and reſemblances between God's natural moral government over us, and that part of it which he has thought fitting to reveal to us by Jeſus Chriſt.

A more accurate and liberal inquiry into the ſcriptures, and a juſter philoſophy, would have given this good man more pleaſing views of the world he lived in, and of the gracious being who is at the head of the univerſe; of his government over us,

and

and our expectations from him. He would have ſeen HIM, *one perſon, one* in the moſt abſolute poſſible ſenſe of the word, *no unity like his*, as the jews ſpeak, and perfectly good; who has declared, that he deſires the happineſs of all his rational creatures, ſo that he could have had no other view than this in bringing us into life; and who, or what ſhall be able to diſappoint the deſires and defeat the deſigns of infinite goodneſs, and power commenſurate to it?

Without holineſs indeed *no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. Rational agents muſt be exerciſed and formed to goodneſs by paſſing through trials and difficulties; at leaſt, we are made acquainted with no other way or method, by which they may be improved, and become laſtingly happy. And if they have defiled their natures, and contracted evil habits, they muſt, by proper diſcipline, be purified and changed. They muſt ſuffer, if not virtuous, and till they become virtuous: for this can only bring durable happineſs.

That

That *all men will finally be brought to happineſs*, though heavy will be the future ſufferings of thoſe who have neglected and refuſed the means of it in the preſent ſtate, is not a doctrine of to-day. It is well known that the learned Origen, a confeſſor for the truth, and a man of incomparable virtue, extended the divine compaſſion to devils, as well as to wicked men: ſuch was his humanity, and ſo high did he rate, and eſteem the goodneſs of God. But happily, we find his plea for the former unneceſſary, ſince neither ſcripture nor reaſon countenance the exiſtence of a powerful evil being, an utter enemy to God and all goodneſs, or of any number of ſuch beings.

This ſentiment, ſo worthy of the Divine Being, has been taken up in our own time, by two perſons of the firſt rank in ſcience and virtue: for I do not diſparage Dr. Hartley, by putting on a level with him, the man, from the peruſal of whoſe works, Dr. Horne ſeeks to divert and diſcourage you

you. It has alſo been maintained, in America, by an excellent perſon lately deceaſed, *(p)*, and is ſaid to gain ground on that continent.

(p) "The myſtery hid from ages and generations, made manifeſt by the goſpel-revelation: or, the ſalvation of all men, the grand thing aimed at in the ſcheme of God, as opened in the New Teſtament-writings, and intruſted with Jeſus Chriſt to bring into effect: By one who wiſhes well to the whole human race." (the late Rev. Dr. Chauncy of Boſton, in New England; who finiſhed his pious, virtuous, and uſeful courſe, Feb. 1787, aged 83.) printed for Dilly, 1784. You will be pleaſed with the force and ſimplicity of the following argument from reaſon on the ſubject he eſpouſes.

'A very great part of thoſe, who will be miſerable in the '*other world*, were not, that we know of, INCURABLY ſin-'ful in *this*.' Multitudes are taken off, before they had op-'portunity to make themſelves *hardened*, *abandoned* ſinners: 'and, as far as we are able to judge, had they been con-'tinued in life, they might have been formed to a virtuous 'temper of mind by a ſuitable mixture of *correction*, *inſtruc-'tion*, and the like. And can it be ſuppoſed, with reſpect 'to ſuch, that an infinitely benevolent God, without *any* '*other trial* in order to effect their reformation, will con-'ſign them over to *endleſs and irreverſible torment?* Would 'this be to conduct himſelf towards them like a *Father?* 'Let the heart of *a father on earth* ſpeak upon this occa-'ſion. Nay, it does not appear, that *any ſinners* are ſo 'INCORRIGIBLE in wickedneſs, as to be beyond recovery,

'by

continent. One bleſſed effect muſt follow, wherever it is cordially entertained, that it will particuiarly contribute to extinguiſh all religious heats and animoſities upon the account of differences in opinion, which have created ſo much diſturbance in the world at all times. For how ſhall I deſpiſe or hate, or evil-intreat one, whom hereafter I ſhall embrace as a brother, and ſhall behold, equally fixed in virtue and happineſs, and no leſs in the divine favour than myſelf?

You will be pleaſed with the following act of devotion, at the end of a treatiſe upon this ſubject, by an author *(q)* of the laſt century. The phraſe and diction in ſome parts

'by ſtill further methods, within the reach of *infinite wiſ-*
'*dom.* And if the infinitely wiſe God can, in any wiſe
'methods, recover them, even in *any other ſtate of trial,*
'may we not argue, from his *infinite benevolence,* that he
'will? And is it not far more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that
'the miſeries of the *other world* are a *proper diſcipline* in order
'to accompliſh this *end,* than that they ſhould be *final* and
'*vindictive* only?' p. 321, 322.

(q) 'The reſtoration of all things: or a vindication of the goodneſs and grace of God, to be manifeſted at laſt in the recovery of his whole creation out of their fall, by Jeremiah White. 1712.'

parts, you will excuſe, as ſavouring of the divinity of the times he lived in; but his ſentiments are noble and divine. He thus uſhers it in. 'I conclude what I have ſaid from the ſcripture, and on this ſubject, with this moſt humble addreſs to God.'

The author's prayer.

Pardon me, o my God, if in the contemplation and experience of thy ſuperabounding grace to myſelf, I have been tranſported in my repreſentation of thee beyond thy allowance. I think it impoſſible to exceed, what I am admiring that grace of thine, which is the higheſt, the ſweeteſt, the moſt exalted name of that love, which is THYSELF, *and the eternal ſpring of all love, and lovelineſs.*

I preſume not to pry into the methods of thy love, and thy ſeaſons for the full manifeſtation of it. How far thy thoughts and ways, which are thy infinite wiſdom, do tranſcend, I know not: but ſure I am, they cannot fall ſhort of the limited perfections of thy creatures. Thou haſt in thy own firſt make, given me a nature all diſpoſed to love. Thou haſt, by thy grace, heightened

heightened and enlarged that love to all thy offſpring, to every thing that bears any image or ſtamp of thyſelf upon it. I could not, as I ought to do, love thee, if I did not love thee, wherever I find thee. Thou haſt commanded me and all thine, to overcome all the evil of this lower world with good. No evil, no injury I have met with in this unkind world, for thy ſake, or upon any other account whatſoever, hath yet exceeded my love and forgiveneſs. Yea, thou haſt made it one of my higheſt pleaſures to love and ſerve enemies. Can I then think any evil in any of thy creatures can overſet thy goodneſs? Thou art the higheſt example to them of all the goodneſs thou requireſt us to ſhew to one another. I muſt believe then, thy grace will ſooner or later ſuperabound, wherever ſin hath moſt abounded; unleſs I can think, that a little drop of being, and but one remove from nothing, can excel in goodneſs that ocean of goodneſs, which hath neither ſhore, bottom, nor ſurface.

Thou art goodneſs itſelf, in the abſtract, in its firſt ſpring, in its ſupreme and univerſal form and ſpirit. We muſt believe thee to be infinitely good, to be good without any meaſure

or

or bound, to be good beyond all expreſſion and conception of all creatures, of men, and angels; or we muſt give over thinking thee to be at all. All the goodneſs which is every where to be found, ſcattered among the creatures, is ſent forth from thee, the fountain, the ſea of all goodneſs. Into this ſea of all goodneſs, I deliver myſelf, and all my fellow-creatures. Thou art love, and canſt no more ceaſe to be ſo, than to be thyſelf. Take thy own methods with us, and ſubmit us to them. Well may we ſo do, in an aſſurance that the beginning, the way, the end of all, is love.

To the inexhauſtible fountain of all grace and goodneſs, from all his creatures, be aſcribed all glory and praiſes, for ever and ever. **Amen. Hallelujah.**

SECTION XIII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *aſſertion that men have no ſouls diſtinct from their bodies, concerns not at all our living again in another world.* Dr. Horne *miſtaken*

miſtaken in his proof from ſcripture relating to it. The popular language there concerning it, how to be underſtood. Luther's *ſentiment. The doctrine revived by biſhop* Law; *defended by Archdeacon* Blackburne; *agreeable to true philoſophy and the ſcriptures. How eaſy to retaliate* Dr. Horne's *treatment of* Dr. Prieſtley.

THERE remains one accuſation more of Dr. Prieſtley to be conſidered, and we ſhall take leave of Dr. Horne, in his *undergraduate*-character.

A great outcry is made by him, at Dr. Prieſtley's ſentiment concerning the compoſition of man: becauſe he aſſerts, that we conſiſt not of a body of matter, and a ſoul that is immaterial, an inhabitant of the body, that takes its flight into ſome other regions when we die; but that the whole man is of one uniform compoſition and material, and dies together.

It is a popular objection, that man has no ſoul, and to the unthinking many carries an idea with it, that all is over with us when we

leave

leave the world; a circumſtance, which Dr. Horne is not unmindful to dwell upon.

Of what materials we are formed, is of no conſequence, if the conſcious living powers, whereby we are capable of knowlege, and of natural and moral improvements, remain after death. And this none more warmly aſſerts, or more ſolidly proves, than Dr. Prieſtley. Candour then ſhould have forbidden the inſinuation, and the encouragement of ſuch a report, againſt one, who is a moſt firm believer of a future ſtate, and who profeſſes his chief dependence for it to reſt upon the goſpel: for which he has undergone much obloquy and calumny, from another claſs of men.

'There is a book of yours, ſays this gen-
'tleman, (ſpeaking for you as well as him-
'ſelf, to Dr. Prieſtley), in which, as you
'tell us, you have made it as evident as any
'thing of this nature can be, that the po-
'pular doctrine of *a ſoul* has no foundation
'in reaſon or the ſcriptures, but was bor-
'rowed from the heathen philoſophy. I,
'continues Dr. Horne, have been differently

'inſtructed, Sir, by a teacher, whoſe au-
'thority is deciſive with ME. *Fear not them*
'*which kill the body, but are not able to kill*
'*the ſoul: but rather fear him, which is able*
'*to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell.* Matt.
x. 28. *(r)*.

This

(r) You will find Dr. Horne, triumphing without cauſe, from a like miſtake of his own in another part of his undergraduate-letter, p. 35. 'Mr. Lindſey,' ſays he, 'has de-
'creed that prayer and thankſgiving ſhall not be directed
'to Chriſt, and therefore he is to be ſtripped of all his of-
'fices, which may ſeem in any way or degree to claim
'them. It is determined that "the prieſthood is no real
"part of his character, nor needs it to be attended to by his
"followers." In another place, to avoid the ſame con-
'cluſion from the declaration, *All power is given to me*
'*in heaven and earth, and lo, I am with you always even to*
'*the end of the world:* the *power* is explained to be that of
'working miracles for the firſt propagation of the goſpel;
'*heaven and earth* are the nations among whom it was pro-
'pagated; and by *the end of the world*, we are to under-
'ſtand 40 years, being the termination of the jewiſh polity,
'and the period of the apoſtles' lives and miniſtry; beyond
'which miraculous gifts were not communicated; Chriſt's
'miſſion to communicate them, if I do not miſtake Mr.
'Lindſey's meaning, being at an end.'

I have

This is one proof, among many, of Dr. Horne's citing the ſcriptures without due

I have no doubt but that I ſhall be able to convince you, in the courſe of this work, that this interpretation of Matt. xxviii. 20, is juſt and ſcriptural, though ſo diſliked by Dr. Horne. And with reſpect to the laſt clauſe, the limitation of Chriſt's power here ſpoken of, ſo good a judge as the late biſhop Pearce, has the following note upon the place. 'To *the end of the world*, ſhould rather be, *to the end of the* 'age; i. e. the end of the jewiſh age. See com. on ch. 'xxiv. 3. This ſeems to limit the promiſe of ſuch aſſiſ-'tance to that period of time.'

Dr. Horne concludes with remarking, p. 37. 'We 'may have the comfort to reflect, upon the whole of Mr. 'Lindſey's reaſonings, that Chriſt is no longer with *us*, 'no longer intereſts himſelf in *our* concerns, nor even 'knows what *we* are doing. And all this, leſt we ſhould 'be guilty of the heinous crime of *praying* to him."

To this I would reply; How far Chriſt is now acquainted with what his followers and the reſt of mankind are doing, upon this globe of ours, we are intirely in the dark, as much as we are concerning the great prophet Elijah's knowlege of human affairs. I am not conſcious of having charged any one with being criminal in praying to Jeſus Chriſt. But if he be not God almighty, but a creature, which laſt I believe him to be, Dr. Horne himſelf draws this concluſion for me, *viz.* that the *whole chriſtian church has been guilty of idolatry, from the very days of the apoſtles.*

conſideration. For our Saviour is very far, in this place, from teaching a contrary doctrine to that of Dr. Prieſtley, concerning the thinking part of man, that it is diſtinct from and independent of the body, that he really ſays nothing at all about it. For the words of the original ſhould be rendered, *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill* the life : *but rather fear him, who is able to deſtroy both body and* life *in hell.*

If he had looked to *ver.* 39. *He that findeth his life, ſhall loſe it : and he that loſeth his life for my ſake ſhall find it*; he would have perceived that our engliſh tranſlators render the ſame word, ψυχη, that is here uſed, not *ſoul*, but *life*, as it would not have been very intelligible to ſay, *he that findeth his* ſoul, *ſhall loſe it.* And ſo in conſiſtency it ought to have been rendered here, *viz.*

Fear

apoſtles. Sermon at Canterbury, before the Archbiſhop, p. 3. In which nevertheleſs I think him ſomewhat miſtaken, as the worſhip of Chriſt as God, did not begin ſo ſoon; though the foundation for it was laid in the apoſtle John's days, by ſome heathen converts, whom he ſeverely reproves in his epiſtles.

Fear not them which kill the body, i. e. the preſent life, Luke xii. 4, 5. *but are not able to kill the life*, i. e. extinguiſh it intirely, *kill* the future *life: but rather fear him, who is able to deſtroy both body and life in hell*; *i. e.* can deſtroy both the preſent and future life. In like manner, Luke xii. 19. 20. *ſoul* ſhould properly be tranſlated *life*.

Our Lord here conſiders life as a thing ſuperadded to the body, and of which it was deprived at death. And he appears to have taken his ideas of it from the moſaic account of the creation, Gen. ii. 7; that *the* LORD *God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life*. This was the general ſentiment of the people of the jews, in all periods, as we find from their hiſtory in the bible. Hence you ſee Martha, the ſiſter of Lazarus, in her dialogue with Chriſt concerning her dead brother, ſpeaking of him as intirely dead, without life; and that if he was to live again, it would be through a reſurrection, by his life being reſtored again to the body, at the laſt day. John xi. 21—24.

Whether a man has ſuch a ſoul or not, as Dr. Horne condemns Dr. Prieſtley for re-

jecting, is of no conſequence, if he has all the conſcious thinking powers and faculties denoted by it, and will have them reſtored to him at the reſurrection at the laſt day; and thereby become the ſubject of the divine approbation, or the contrary, for his behaviour, in the preſent ſtate.

And however ſome may be diſturbed at the thought of their whole frame, ſoul and body, being diſſolved, and dying together, our living again afterwards will not at all be affected by it. For *that*, moſt aſſuredly, will not depend on the mere materials of our compoſition, but on the will of the gracious power that put them together.

And it is obſervable, that in the ſcriptures, with reſpect to our living again hereafter, there is no ſtreſs laid on our original make and conſtitution, the immateriality, or natural immortality of the ſuppoſed thinking part within us, and the like: but our future life is deſcribed as reſting ſolely on a reſurrection from the dead, built upon the promiſes of God, and aſcertained to us by the reſurrection of Chriſt, our elder brother.

It may diminiſh the prejudices of ſome perſons againſt Dr. Prieſtley, on account of his opinion on this point, that the famous Luther entertained the ſentiment of *the ſleep of the ſoul* till the reſurrection, which is very near akin to the *having no ſoul at all.* We are made acquainted with a pleaſing circumſtance relating to this, by his hiſtorian, Seckendorf, in a reflection made by that reformer, upon being told of the ſudden death of his friend, a pious and excellent prince, John elector of Saxony; who died of an apoplexy, immediately upon his returning from the chace *(s)*. 'God, ſaid Luther, 'took him away without pain, like a child 'that gently and without apprehenſion 'breathes its laſt. At the reſurrection at 'the laſt day, it will ſeem to him, as if he

(s) Deus, ait, illi eventre fecit, quod pueris, qui abſque cura naſcuntur, vivunt et exſpirant: cum reſurrecturus eſt in die noviſſimo, putabit ſe ex ſaltu Lochavienſi, ubi venabatur, venire. Seckendorf. Hiſt. Luth. l. iii. p. 30. See an hiſtorical view of the controverſy concerning the intermediate ſtate, &c. p. 349, 350. By Archdeacon Blackburne, 1772. In which the reader will find amuſement and inſtruction upon this curious ſubject, ſuch as is no where elſe to be met with.

'was juſt come from the foreſt, where he 'was hunting.'

Did not friendſhip, affection, and high eſteem, preſerve, and will long preſerve fragrant and freſh, the memory of the truly learned Archdeacon of Cleveland, Mr. Blackburne, the ſubject, and the name of Luther would call (t) to mind this his great admirer, and moſt able defender of the doctrine of the ſleep of the ſoul; who in Auguſt, 1787, at the age of 82, with his judgment, and powers of body and mind in extraordinary

(t) He had been for a long time laying in various materials from books, and other ſources, and had attended much to the works of this reformer, with a view to have given his life in engliſh; in which he had made ſome ſmall beginnings. But he was diverted from it at firſt by another work; and afterwards, by the ſhock he received from the loſs of his ſecond ſon, Dr. Thomas Blackburne, who was cut off by a fever in his 31ſt year, and the more, as he depended upon him to complete whatever he might leave imperfect: to which indeed he was fully equal, being a ſcholar, of fine parts, improved by claſſical and all other knowlege, beſides his eminence in his profeſſion. He was alſo of the ſoundeſt principles, civil and religious, and his manners open, and diſpoſitions amiable and generous as his perſon was manly, and pleaſing:

Chariſſimam animam
His ſaltem accumulem donis.

traordinary vigour, his eyeſight only much impaired, though not wholly gone, expired, without a ſigh or groan, in his ſleep, as he ſat in his chair, ſoon after having chearfully told thoſe about him, that he ſhould compoſe himſelf to reſt.

And exactly one week after him, in his 85th year, his antient friend, ſchool-fellow, and member of the ſame univerſity, Dr. Law, biſhop of Carliſle, finiſhed his mortal courſe, and fell aſleep, more enfeebled in body for one or two years, but with the ſame gentle, pious, liberal and benevolent ſpirit he had always poſſeſſed, and with the moſt aſſured, chearful hope of awaking again to an immortal life, on the morning of the reſurrection. He was acquainted with, and always expreſſed a very high eſteem for Dr. Prieſtley, and was intirely with him in his ſentiments concerning the ſoul; and was alſo the reviver, in our times, of the opinion, that there is no intermediate ſtate between death and the reſurrection; but that the two moments of our death and reſtoration to life at the laſt day, will be connected together; which ſeems now very generally to prevail among thoſe

thoſe who conſult the ſcriptures concerning a point, which *they* only can determine. This worthy prelate had the courage to propoſe the queſtion of *the ſleep of the ſoul*, to be defended by him for his degree of doctor in divinity, in the univerſity of Cambridge, and made his *theſis* upon it. In the margin you will *(u)* ſee ſome ſmall account of this worthy perſon, as a head of a college; and one or two anecdotes of what happened to him, for the freedom of his ſentiments, in his exerciſe for his doctor's degree; taken from eccleſiaſtical memorials of the times, by a public-ſpirited capable obſerver, ſome years ſince deceaſed, deſtined by their author not to ſee the light of 30 years from the time of his death. But this that relates to biſhop Law, much to his honour, a part of which only I give you, hath, I know not how, tranſpired before the time.

I can-

(u) 'I heard him, with great pleaſure perform his exer-
'ciſe for his doctor's degree, at the public ſchools in Cam-
'bridge, January, 1748-9. Dr. Parne, the moderator *pro*
'*tempore*, was his opponent.—One great doctor, head of a
'great college, refuſed to ſign his teſtimonial; ſaying, that
'he did not like either his perſon or his doctrine. Yet after-
'wards

I cannot do better than cloſe this head, with what Dr. Prieſtley himſelf ſays upon the ſubject, after having mentioned the inſuperable difficulties attending the popular notion

'wards he was reconciled, when Law became head of St. 'Peter's college, and made him frequent viſits, &c. Arch- 'biſhop Potter, he told me, diſliked his doctrine about in- 'ſpiration and reproved him. Warburton told him, he diſ- 'ſparaged the church, by which he got his bread. Arch- 'biſhop Herring, on hearing of his *theſis* at Cambridge, 'ſaid to him; "I neither juſtify, nor condemn you. If "your doctrine be right, I am no loſer; if wrong, I am "but as I was: I am in the hands of a juſt and merciful "God, to whom I wholly commit myſelf. I believe his "goſpel, and am perſuaded you do ſo as much as I, though "we may have different ſentiments about ſome particulars. "We ſhall both of us, I hope, meet in heaven." 'When 'in going his rounds to the heads of houſes, preſently after 'his keeping this act, he came to Dr. Caſtle, the worthy 'maſter of Corpus Chriſti college, he ſaid to him, in his 'blunt and honeſt manner,' "I know that this is a ſocinian "tenet; but I believe you deſerve your degree, and will "readily ſign your teſtimonial."

'On Sundays, in the afternoon, he inſtructed the young 'men of his college, deſigned for orders, in the original 'language, ſenſe, and deſign of the New Teſtament, and 'of the Old, in the hebrew, &c. and has nothing more at 'heart than teaching the chriſtian religion in its native 'purity and ſimplicity; of which he was a compleat maſter.'

Gentleman's magazine for Auguſt, 1787. p. 745.

notion of a ſoul, diſtinct from the body, and dwelling in it.

'How eaſy is it, ſays he, to get rid of all 'the embaraſſment attending the doctrine 'of a ſoul, in every view of it, by admit-'ting, agreeably to all the phenomena, that 'the power of thinking belongs to the *brain* 'of a man, as that of walking to his feet, or 'that of ſpeaking to his tongue; that, 'therefore, man, who is *one being*, is com-'poſed of *one kind of ſubſtance*, made of *the 'duſt of the earth*; that when he dies, he, 'of courſe, ceaſes to think; but when his 'ſleeping duſt ſhall be reanimated at the 'reſurrection, his power of thinking, and 'his conſciouſneſs will be reſtored to him.

'This ſyſtem gives a real value to the 'doctrine of *a reſurrection from the dead*, 'which is peculiar to revelation, on which 'alone the ſacred writers build all our hopes 'of a future life; and it explains the uni-'form language of the ſcriptures, which 'ſpeak of one day of judgment for all man-'kind, and repreſent all the rewards of vir-'tue, and all the puniſhments of vice, as 'taking place at the awful day, and not be-

fore

'fore. This doctrine of a reſurrection was 'laughed at by the conceited Athenians, and 'will always be the ſubject of ridicule to 'perſons of a ſimilar turn of mind: but it 'is abundantly confirmed to us by the well-'atteſted reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, and 'and the promiſes of the goſpel, eſtabliſhed 'on all the miraculous events by which the 'promulgation of chriſtianity was attend-'ed *(x)*.'

Give me leave to recommend to your peruſal the xiith ſection of this work of Dr. Prieſtley's, from which the above citation is made, as affording you ſuch juſt, ſublime, and affecting conceptions of the deity, as are rarely to be found.

In bringing theſe charges againſt Dr. Prieſtley, and his opinions, which we have been examining, and putting every thing in the moſt invidious light, Dr. Horne has not conſidered, how open he is to a retort of the like kind, were any diſpoſed to make it.

Suppoſe

(x) Diſquiſitions relating to matter and ſpirit, p. 102.

Suppoſe now other perſons ſhould begin, as he has ſet the example, p. 16, 17, &c.

Marvellous and moſt degrading, Sir, to us appears your doctrine concerning the ever-bleſſed, omnipotent, all-perfect creator; and moſt painful to reflect upon:

That HE, the eternal, who was before all things, was born in time, of a jewiſh virgin, 1787 years ſince, after having lain nine months in the ſtate of an embrio in the womb of his mother:

That HE, the ſource of all wiſdom and power, from being a puling, ſenſeleſs babe, acquired ſtrength and knowlege, by degrees:

That after having ſerved an apprenticeſhip to his father, Joſeph, at the trade of a carpenter, HE who giveth all things to all, worked at that trade himſelf, for a livelihood:

That HE, who filleth the univerſe with his preſence, lay concealed for twenty ſix years at leaſt, in an obſcure town in Judea, and was conſidered all the time by all that knew him, as nothing more than a fellow-mortal:

That

That HE, whom the apoſtle juſtly ſtiles, ο μακαριος, *the happy*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 15. a being of the moſt perfect happineſs, was ſubject to hunger and thirſt, and pain and ſuffering; was abuſed, inſulted, and ſpit upon;

And HE, *the living* God, at laſt put to death by his own creatures.

The reſt of the incredible ſtory (*y*), the enemies of the goſpel will dilate upon with pleaſure.

(*y*) Voltaire has done it, in his Epître á Uranie, which begins,

Long tems vil œuvrier, le rabot à la main, &c. &c.

But perhaps it is no where more fully ſeen, what advantage is given to the adverſaries of the goſpel, by maintaining the doctrine of the trinity, and Jeſus to be the ſupreme God, than in a jewiſh tract intitled Nizzachon vetus, publiſhed in 1680, and written, as the editor with great probability points out, in the 12th century. In this there are many miſtakes concerning our chriſtian ſcriptures, and much unworthy abuſe and groundleſs calumny; but ſuch arguments are urged againſt the goſpel, on the ſuppoſition of Chriſt being the moſt high God, as cannot be confuted. A believer of a trinity in unity would not find it eaſy to make a ſatisfactory reply to the following paſſage, which I give in the latin tranſlation; particularly to the jew's inquiry, who was all the time in heaven, and who it was that governed the world, when God was three days dead in the ſepulcre. 'Amplius quæram aliquid ex te, mi chriſtiane: 'Agedum

SECTION XIV.

Of Dr. Horne's *wrong interpretation of ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture.*

From the ſame concern for you, with which I believe Dr. Horne to have been influenced in his endeavours to divert you from the peruſal of Dr. Prieſtley's writings, I am ſolicitous to point out to you ſome miſtakes of his own: in the which if you follow

Agedum reſponde mihi. Tu affirmas filium natum eſſe ex viſceribus Mariæ; dic dum igitur num pater et filius immundus, juxta cum filio, an vero ſolus filius in ventre delituerit? Si dicas ſolum ibi fuiſſe filium, quæſo annon ipſa ſe mutuo deſtruunt verba tua? cum contendas divinitatis perſonas nulla unquam ratione a ſe invicem poſſe divelli. Quod ſi dicas tres in utero extitiſſe, atque ibi fuiſſe nutritos; neceſſe eſt concedas, quod etiam tres cum hominibus verſati ſint, ac tres fuerint ſuſpenſi. Quis vero toto illo tempore in cœlis erat? quoniam diviſionem nullam admittunt. Quis item per id triduum quo ſepulti erant, orbem gubernabat, cum nemo ex iis aut in cœlo, aut in terris degeret.'

Nizzachon vetus, p. 152.

follow him, he may miſlead you moſt capitally, eſpecially with regard to the Being you are to worſhip.

My remarks will be confined to ſome of the proofs which he alleges, in two of the diſcourſes of his firſt volume, in ſupport of the doctrine of the trinity, and the divinity of Chriſt; and to the extraordinary manner, in which, in another work, he interprets the ſcriptures, and exemplifies his full belief of Jeſus being the moſt high God, by addreſſing prayer to him.

In his firſt diſcourſe, vol. i. p. 9, 10, &c. upon the text, Gen. i. 26, *God ſaid, let* US *make man in* OUR *own image*, &c. taking in alſo, Gen. xi. 7. he remarks; 'Theſe '*plural* forms, thus uſed by the deity, de-'mand our attention. Three ſolutions of 'the queſtion have been offered.'

He then rejects the ſolution given by the jews, that God ſpeaks to his angels; becauſe, as he imagines, it would ſuppoſe, that the angels were coadjutors with him in the creation. This however the language by

no means neceſſarily implies. And the interpretation is rendered the more probable, as the Almighty is repreſented as attended with angels, in all the divine appearances on earth. It ſeems alſo to be confirmed as being an antient jewiſh opinion, from Job xxxviii. 7. *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth?—when the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy?* (z)

Another ſolution, that God is introduced, ſpeaking after the manner of kings, and great perſonages, Dr. Horne alſo refuſes, though not for any valid reaſon, as it ſhould ſeem; *viz.* for it being unworthy of God to borrow language from men; when in fact it is univerſally the caſe in

(z) [*The morning ſtars.*] 'They are ſtiled *the ſons of God* in the next ſentence. The *ſons of God* are the angels, Job, i. 6. ii. 1. I ſuppoſe they are called the *morning ſtars*, on account of the luminous vehicles wherewith they are clothed. The morning ſtar is exceedingly bright. What a grand appearance does the poet here preſent to our view, ten thouſand times ten thouſand and thouſand of thouſands of glittering angels attending the birth of our world, and ſinging Hallelujas to the Almighty Father.' Scott's book of Job in engliſh verſe, with remarks, &c.

in our ſacred books, and one does not well ſee how the divine Being could otherwiſe make himſelf intelligible to mortals.

The real ſtate of the matter however is, that there is no myſtery in it, one way or other; no ground to think that Moſes's language was inſpired, but that he expreſſed things in the way he judged beſt, and varied his expreſſions in this ſort, for the greater ſolemnity, as man was the nobleſt work of God, when he came to ſpeak of his creation.

Let us now hear, what Dr. Horne has to offer himſelf upon the point.

'What then ſhould hinder us, proceeds 'he, from accepting the third ſolution, 'given by the beſt expoſitors antient and 'modern, (*N. B.* the *beſt* only according 'to *his* ideas) and drawn from this conſider-'ation, that in *the unity of the divine eſſence* 'there is a plurality of perſons coequal and 'coeternal, who might ſay, with truth and 'propriety, *Let* US *make man*; and *man is* 'become like one of US? Of *ſuch a perſonality*, 'revelation informs us; it is that upon 'which the economy of man's redemption 'is founded; his creation, as well as that

'of the world, is, in different paſſages, at-
'tributed to the Father, to the Son, and to
'the Holy Spirit; what more natural there-
'fore than that at his production, this
'form of ſpeech ſhould be uſed by the
'divine perſons? What more rational than
'to ſuppoſe, that a doctrine ſo important
'to the human race, was communicated
'from the beginning, that men might know
'whom they worſhiped, and how they ought
'to worſhip? What other good and ſuffi-
'cient reaſon can be given, why the name
'of God, in uſe among believers from the
'firſt, ſhould likewiſe be in the *plural* num-
'ber, connected with verbs and pronouns in
'the *ſingular*?

Remarks.

1. I put in the margin an obſervation (*a*) of Dr. Croft, in his late ſermons at the Bampton-

(*a*) 'Perhaps too much ſtreſs is laid upon the expreſſions, Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man in* our *image.* The plural is frequently applied to one only: and the language of conſultation is evidently uſed in condeſcenſion to human infirmity. With the ſame kind of condeſcenſion, we are told

Bampton-lecture; that this *plural* way of ſpeaking is not a proper foundation upon which to build a plurality of perſons, co-equal, and coeternal, in the unity of the divine eſſence, as Dr. Horne aſſerts; we may therefore, conſidering the foregoing better ſolutions of the phraſeology, diſmiſs this firſt argument of his, as having nothing at all in it.

 2. With

told, Gen. xviii. 20, 21. that *the* LORD *ſaid*; *becauſe the cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is great, and becauſe their ſin is very grievous, I will go down now and ſee, whether they have done according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.* It is dangerous to reſt an article of faith upon that, which may be only a mere idiom.'—Sermons in the year 1786, at the Bampton-lecture, by Dr. Croft.

I would obſerve to you here, by the way, that Juſtin Martyr, a heathen philoſopher and convert, one of the firſt who corrupted the ſcriptures by bringing in his heathen fancies of a ſecond God, inferior to the one ſupreme, and making Chriſt to be that ſecond God; introduces Chriſt here, Gen. i. 26. as the perſon to whom God ſpoke: and makes *him* the perſon that went down to Sodom and Gomorrha, and *not* the creator of the univerſe. See Dial. cum. Tryph. p. 153. 159. Ed. Benedict. Hagæ Comitum, 1742.

2. With reſpect to the argument which he would deduce from the plural termination of one of the hebrew names of God, Elohim or Aleim, in favour of a plurality of perſons in the deity, you can have nothing more ſatisfactory in confutation of it, than what is advanced by Dr. Prieſtley, in a maſterly, original manner, in his reply to Mr. Parkhurſt, at the end of the volume which contains his letters to Dr. Horne, and to yourſelves.

But as Dr. Kennicott has ſtained his noble work, by giving countenance to this weak argument for the doctrine of the trinity, from the plural noun, *elohim*, being joined with a verb in the ſingular number, in the 48th page of his general diſſertation prefixed to his hebrew bible: I ſhall give you an extract of what a moſt valuable perſon, lately deceaſed, and a maſter of biblical learning, has remarked in reply to him (*b*).

'Let

(*b*) Exodus; a corrected tranſlation, with notes, by William Hopkins, B. A. Vicar of Bolney, and Maſter of the Grammar ſchool of Cuckfield, Eſſex, p. 149.

'Let the doctor's premiſes be allowed, ſays Mr. Hopkins; let all the verbs through the bible, when the true God is denoted by *Elohim*, be granted to be uſed in the ſingular number, I abſolutely deny the argument deduced from hence, to prove a plurality and unity in the divine being: or, to expreſs it in the language of the Athanaſian creed, *One God in trinity, and trinity in unity.*

'But to conſider more particularly the nature of the argument, on which the learned doctor ſeems to lay ſo great a ſtreſs; let it be obſerved, that nothing certain can be concluded from the hebrew word *Elohim* being plural, in favour of a plurality of perſons in the godhead, becauſe all languages have words in the plural number of a ſingular ſignification.

'With regard to *Elohim*, it unqueſtionably in many inſtances ſignifies *one* perſon, ſo that no argument can be drawn from it, as neceſſarily ſignifying more perſons than *one*.

'And as the word *Elohim* has confeſſedly a plural termination, though often uſed in a ſingular ſenſe, it is no wonder that the

ſacred writers ſhould apply a plural verb to *Elohim*, when uſed of *falſe* gods, and a ſingular verb when uſed of the *one* true God; which is certainly done with the ſtricteſt propriety.

'The *greek* tranſlation of the bible, which was made near 300 years before our Savour's time, always uſes the word *God*, (*Theos*,) which anſwers to *Elohim* in the hebrew, in the ſingular number, when it ſignifies the *one* true God. The ſame may be ſaid of the *Syriac* tranſlation, which was made ſoon after the days of the apoſtles, from the beginning of the Old, to the end of the New Teſtament.

'Our bleſſed Saviour was ſo far from blaming the jews for their uſing the word *Elohim* to ſignifiy ONE perſon, that he has expreſsly confirmed that ſenſe by his own authority, John viii. 54. xviii. 3, with many other paſſages to the ſame purpoſe. Accordingly, every penman of the New Teſtament, from the beginning to the end, conſtantly uſes the word *Theos*, which anſwers to *Elohim* in the hebrew, in the ſingular number, or to ſignify *one* perſon, when it is uſed

uſed of the one true God. And who the *perſon* intended by God is, appears (not to mention ſeveral hundred paſſages to the ſame purpoſe) from the unanſwerable words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. viii. 6. *though there be that are called* gods, *whether in heaven or on earth—yet to us there is but one God,* (*Theos or Elohim*) even the *Father, of whom are all things, and we by him; and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

On ſuch weak grounds of an *idiom of ſpeech* merely, and on the miſtaken meaning, and conſtruction of an hebrew word, does Dr. Horne's trinity of the Old Teſtament ſtand. And yet on this, which is a non-entity, he ſays, the economy of man's ſalvation is founded: on this, he aſſerts, that the human race, from the beginning, worſhiped ſuch a trinity as he himſelf worſhips; and that, the God of Adam, (p. 13) of 'Noah, and of Abraham, conſiſted of three 'perſons, the Father, the Son, and the 'Holy Ghoſt.' When the foundation is thus of ſand, the fabric muſt give way and fall.

In

In his viith diſcourſe (p. 191 of the ſame vol.) upon John i. 14. *The word was made fleſh*, &c. he immediately obſerves, that in the exordium of his goſpel, John 'firſt 'publiſhes, ver. 1. the divinity, and then, 'here, the incarnation of his moſt adora-'ble and beloved maſter.'

But the real fact is, that he publiſhes neither the one, nor the other; being, as I truſt you will eaſily be able to ſee, an abſolute ſtranger to both.

In going on to prove, that Chriſt is the *word* ſpoken of in the firſt verſe of John's goſpel, our author is equally unfortunate, as he has appeared above, in miſtaking the language of the Old Teſtament. For he aſſerts, p. 195, "that the *word of* 'Jehovah, is frequently and evidently the 'ſtile *of a perſon*, who is ſaid, *to come*, *to be* 'be revealed or manifeſted, and the like. As 'in Gen. xv. 1. 4. *after theſe things*, the 'word of (Jehovah) the LORD came *unto* 'Abraham *in a viſion*, *ſaying*, *fear not*, 'Abra-

'*Abraham! I am thy ſhield, and thy ex-*
'*ceeding great reward. And Abraham ſaid,*
'LORD God, *what wilt thou give me*, &c.'

But you will eaſily perceive that the *word of the* LORD came to Abraham here, only in the ſame way, that *the word of God came* to John, Luke iii. 2, in the wilderneſs. In neither caſe are we to underſtand, that a perſon different from God, called the word of God, or the word of the LORD appeared to them; but by the term *word*, we are to underſtand a meſſage, or revelation that was given to them, and the perſon who ſpoke to Abraham was Jehovah, God, the Divine Being himſelf; and if Luke had entered into the particulars of the divine meſſage to John, he would have told us, that it was God who ſpoke to him. So that it is mere prepoſſeſſion, and ignorance of the phraſeology of ſcripture, that makes any one imagine Chriſt to be the word of the LORD that ſpoke to Abraham.

Our author's next proof of Chriſt being the *word* ſpoken of in the entrance of John's goſpel, is, p. 196. The LORD (or *Jehovah*)

vah) revealed himſelf to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD *(or of Jehovah.)* 1 Sam. iii. 21.

It pities one to ſee ſuch inattention to the proper meaning of ſcripture-language. Our author here again builds the doctrine of Chriſt being the *word*, and conſequently, in his idea, the moſt high God, upon a pure idiom of the hebrew language; which, you may truly ſay, juſt as much proves Dr. Horne as Chriſt to be the moſt high God; *i. e.* it is applicable to neither. For the repetition of the noun itſelf in the ſame ſentence, inſtead of uſing the pronoun, is very frequent in the ſacred writings. Gen. xix. 24. *Thus the* LORD *rained upon Sodom brimſtone and fire, from the* LORD *out of heaven.* See Exod. xvi. 7. xvii. 16, &c. &c. And ſo the LORD *revealed himſelf to Samuel by the word of the* LORD, *i. e.* by himſelf, in a more particular extraordinary manner than to others ſince the time of Moſes: which is biſhop Patrick's explanation, without any ſuch myſterious meaning as Dr. Horne would make out of it.

Another

Another great miſtake of Dr. Horne's, reſpecting the Old Teſtament, is, where he ſays, p. 198. 'that our Saviour is ſtiled Je-'hovah, a name appropriated to the deity.' Such an affirmation ought not ſurely to have been made without ſome proof of it given or referred to. But leſt you ſhould imagine there is ſomething in it, as coming from a perſon of ſo great reputation as a divine, I ſhall produce and examine the paſſages of the Old Teſtament, uſually brought to prove Chriſt to be Jehovah, the ſelfexiſtent, eternal God.

Jeremiah xxiii. 6. *In his days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is his name whereby he ſhall be called,* The LORD *(or Jehovah) our righteouſneſs.*

But the words of the prophet are falſely tranſlated in our engliſh verſion, as a learned man hath obſerved, whoſe remarks will be recited at length, in the laſt part of this work; and we ſhould read them thus: *and this is the name by which Jehovah ſhall call him, our righteouſneſs.*

The late biſhop Lowth's father, who adopts this opinion, has this note upon the paſſage.

'He

'He (Chriſt) ſhall really be what the title 'imports; he ſhall be JEHOVAH, or the 'true GOD. The title of Jehovah, adds 'Mr. Lowth, is elſewhere given to the 'Meſſias by the prophets. See Iſaiah xl. 10. 'xlviii. 17. Hoſ. i. 7. Zech. ii. 10, 11. 'Malachi iii. 1.' Of theſe we ſhall take a brief view to ſee what they yield.

Iſa. xl. 10. Behold the LORD (or *Jehovah) God will come with a ſtrong hand.* It is an uſual expreſſion, that the Almighty is ſaid to come to men, when he ſends his prophets. And at the firſt preaching of the goſpel, to which Iſaiah here refers, Jehovah did come by Jeſus the prophet of Nazareth, his choſen meſſenger to men. So that the paſſage affords no proof that Chriſt was Jehovah, but only his prophet.

—— xlviii. 17. *Thus ſaith the* LORD, (Jehovah) *thy redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael; I am the* LORD, (Jehovah) *thy God.* There is nothing here that belongs to Chriſt. The titles of ſaviour, and redeemer, at all times belong primarily to God; and to Chriſt only in a ſubordinate ſenſe.

Hoſea

Hoſea i. 7. *But I will have mercy on the houſe of Judah, and will ſave them by the* LORD *their God.* i. e. will ſave them by myſelf: the noun repeated, as above, inſtead of the pronoun. Chriſt is not at all concerned here.

Zechariah ii. 10, 11. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midſt of thee, ſaith the* LORD, (Jehovah) *and many nations ſhall be joined to the* LORD *in that day, and ſhall be my people, and I will dwell in the midſt of them, and thou ſhalt know that the* LORD *of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee.*

The former part of this paſſage, if it be ſpoken of the times of the goſpel, relates to the extraordinary divine powers given to Chriſt and his apoſtles: but the laſt ſeem to be the words of the angel, mentioned in the begining of the chapter, declaring, that they ſhould be fully convinced, that the extraordinary hand of divine providence was concerned in bringing about thoſe events. Mr. Lowth, I ſuppoſe, would have them to ſignify, that one Jehovah, one eternal God had ſent another eternal God.

Malachi

Malachi iii. 1. *Behold I will ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the way before me; (and the Lord, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple) even the meſſenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he ſhall come, ſaith* LORD *of hoſts.*

Here is a deſcription of Chriſt's coming, but no proof of his being Jehovah. The *Lord* here ſpoken of, *Adon*, is almighty God himſelf, whoſe alone the temple was; and which Chriſt calls (Matth. xii. 4.) *the houſe of God*, and John ii. 16.) *my Father's houſe*.

You hence learn, how little you can depend upon the beſt commentators, and moſt learned men. That accompliſhed ſcholar, and ſon of this worthy commentator, biſhop Lowth, lately deceaſed, has given into an almoſt incredible weakneſs, in his valuable new verſion of, and commentary on Iſaiah, as I have pointed out in (c) another place; in making the *threefold* repetition of the word *holy*, in the hymn of the angelic beings, Iſa. vi. 3. to be a *demonſtration of the myſtery of*

(c) Examination of Mr. Robinſon of Cambridge's plea for the divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. p. 98.

of the trinity in the divine unity. This I take the preſent opportunity of repeating, leſt ſuch names as his, ſhould overſway your judgments.

More extraordinary ſtill, is what immediately follows in Dr. Horne, where he produces, *I am alpha and omega, the firſt and the laſt*, Rev. i. 11. as a proof of Chriſt being the moſt high God; and to corroborate it, ſays; 'Upon this paſſage, which is 'found Rev. i. 11, Dr. Doddridge has the 'following note: "that theſe titles (which 'occur juſt above in ver. 8. *(t)*) ſhould be 'repeated ſo ſoon in a connection which de-'monſtrates they are given to Chriſt, will 'appear very remarkable, whatever ſenſe be 'given to the 8th verſe. The argument 'drawn in the preceding note upon it, would 'have been ſtrong, wherever ſuch a paſſage 'as this had been found: but its immediate 'connection with this, greatly ſtrengthens 'it. And I cannot forbear recording it, 'that this text has done more than any other 'in

(*t*) The 8th verſe is. *I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

'in the bible, towards preventing me from 'giving into that ſcheme, which would 'make our Lord Jeſus Chriſt no more than 'a deified creature.'

Thus we have here a confeſſion, that this paſſage was what principally contributed to make this celebrated preſbyterian divine regard Chriſt as the moſt high God, and not a creature; and it is brought in by the dean of Canterbury as what confirms him in the ſame belief.

But unluckily for them, this paſſage, on which they both build ſo much, is a nullity; owing to inadvertence, or a deſigned interpolation of ſome tranſcriber, and not from the pen of the ſacred writer.

One wonders, that the proofs exhibited by Mill, and Bengelius, of the ſpuriouſneſs of this paſſage, had no effect on Dr. Doddridge. But Dr. Horne's inattention is more extraordinary, who has had an opportunity of knowing what has been further produced to ſhew that it is not genuine, by Wetſtein, and Grieſbach. This laſt moſt learned man, though himſelf a believer in the trinity and the divinity of Chriſt, has had

the

the courage and integrity, in his valuable edition of the Greek N. Teſtament, to leave out this paſſage, as alſo the ſpurious text of the three witneſſes, 1 John v. 7. as not being any part of ſcripture. I put Wetſtein's and Grieſbach's authorities relating to it in the (g) margin, whence you ſee that the paſſage on which Dr. Horne builds ſo much, is not in the Alexandrian, Vatican, and royal Pariſian manuſcript-copies of the New Teſtament, nor in ſeveral others; that it has no place in ſeveral of the moſt ancient verſions of the New Teſtament; and on theſe accounts has been very properly omitted in ſeveral printed editions of the Greek Teſtament.

Dr. Horne is no leſs in error in affirming Chriſt to be the *word* ſpoken of in the pre-

(g) "AC 2. 4. 8. 9. 10. 11. 13. 14. 17. 18. 19. 25 '26. 27. 28. Editio' *Complut. Plantin. Genev. Bengelii.* 'Verſio *Vulg. Syr. Copt. Armen. Æthiop. Arethas. An-* '*dreas.* probante *J. Millio.*' Wetſtein in loc.

'ABC. 2. 9. 10. 14. al. 13. Ed. Syr. (non Arr.) 'Copt. Æth. Arm. Vulg. Areth. Andr. MS. Primas.' Grieſbach.

face of John's goſpel, and as ſuch, the ſupreme God. For this term, logos, *word*, might more properly be tranſlated, *reaſon*, *wiſdom*; and it is not here (nor indeed any where) *(q)* a name of Chriſt, but an attribute of God, his wiſdom; and God is thus denominated by his wiſdom, his word, or power; which is a phraſe of ſpeech very frequent with the hebrews, the word of the LORD, the word of God, the wiſdom of God, ſignifying God himſelf. And ſo in Proverbs viii. Solomon ſpeaks of wiſdom as a perſon that was with God before and when he created the world; intending thereby only to ſignify in a more lively animated manner, that God made all things and governs them by the moſt perfect wiſdom.

But

(q) A controverſial writer of the times, having aſſerted, that "in Rev. xix. 13. Chriſt is termed the *word* of God; and that every one knows, that he is more frequently ſo ſtiled in the unconteſted writings of St. John than elſewhere." Dr. Lardner remarks: "Though Mr. Twells ſays, *every one* knows this; I muſt entreat him to make an exception for me, till ſomebody has ſhewn me the ſeveral texts of St. John's unconteſted writings, where Chriſt is ſo called: for, at preſent, I do not know one."

Lardner's Credibility, p. ii. vol. iv. p. 71.

But in the ſecond part of this work, you will find this proem of John's goſpel, or what he ſays as from himſelf, in the beginning of his goſpel, not to be deſcriptive of Chriſt, but of almighty God himſelf, as the ſole creator of all things, and diſpenſer of light and knowlege, in different ways, and at different times, to his creatures, but laſt of all, in the fulleſt manner, by Jeſus Chriſt.

The word, proceeds the apoſtle, ver. 14. (i. e. not Chriſt, but the divine wiſdom), *was made,* or *was a man,* a mortal creature: for that is the meaning of the term *fleſh* (*s*) here;

(*s*) *Fleſh* is put for man as mortal. Pſ. lx. v. 2. Iſ. xl. 5, 6. Matt. xxiv. 22. Gal. ii. 16. See alſo John xvii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 29, &c. &c. The language therefore commonly uſed, viz. God *incarnate*, the word *incarnate*, the *incarnation* of Chriſt, is as groſs and diſguſting, as it is wholly unſcriptural; as if the Divine Being, or Chriſt conſidered as the firſt of angelic beings, were ſhut up in a caſe of fleſh and blood. Such unwarranted expreſſions therefore, however venerable for their antiquity, ought to be given up. St. Paul declares moſt diſtinctly, 1 Cor. xv. *Fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Dr. Horne however, ſuch are his prejudices, ſends the Almighty himſelf to heaven, clothed in fleſh and blood. 'God *incarnate*, (ſays he) is gone up into 'that holy place not made with hands; the everlaſting doors 'of heaven are opened for the king of glory to enter, and 'repoſſeſs his antient throne,' &c. Comment. on Pſalm xlvii. 5.

here; and ſo, to avoid a harſh ambiguity to common readers, it would be better to tranſlate it. If you want to have this explained, the apoſtle goes on to do it for you. *The word*, ſays he, or wiſdom *was made*, or *was* (fleſh). *a man, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the well-beloved of the father, full of grace and truth*: i. e. The divine wiſdom was in the man Chriſt Jeſus, and by him dwelt among us; being communicated to him in a degree never before communicated to mortals: *and we* (his apoſtles) *ſaw his glory*, were witneſſes of the extraordinary gifts of a divine power beſtowed upon him; *the glory as of the well-beloved of the Father*; i. e. ſuch high divine communications as beſpoke him to be moſt highly approved by, and beloved of the ſupreme Father of all.

In the ſame diſcourſe, p. 204, Dr. Horne ſays; 'The apoſtle to the hebrews, writing 'on the ſubject of *the incarnation*, thus 'expreſſeth himſelf, *he taketh not hold of 'angels, but he taketh hold of the ſeed of 'Abraham*;

'*Abraham*; i. e. he took or aſſumed the 'manhood into God.'

One is concerned to ſee ſuch an intire want of attention to the real meaning of the ſcripture, and right interpretation of it. For ſo far is the apoſtle from writing here upon the ſubject of the *incarnation*, that there is nothing that indicates that he had ever any idea of ſuch a thing in his mind here, or any where. What may be ſuppoſed to have led Dr. Horne into ſuch a miſtake, is his implicitly following our very wrong engliſh tranſlation of this and the foregoing verſe, which a ſcholar and one that undertakes to teach truth to others ſhould not have done. I have put our common engliſh and the true verſion in the margin (*w*) in oppoſite columns; from

(*w*) Heb. ii. 14.

Common Verſion.	True Verſion.
Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame.	*Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf* in like manner was a partaker of the ſame.
For verily he took not on him the nature *of angels*; *but he* took on him *the ſeed of Abraham.*	*For verily he* helpeth *not angels*; *but he* helpeth *the ſeed of Abraham.*

which you will perceive that the apoſtle is ſo far from treating of what Dr. Horne calls the *incarnation*, that he in expreſs words aſſerts, that Jeſus was a human creature, like all the reſt of us. I have alſo ſubjoined (*x*) Hardy's notes on the two verſes, to the ſame purpoſe, becauſe he generally favours the divinity of Chriſt in his interpretations, and therefore will be the leſs ſuſpected of partiality.

SECTION XV.

Of Dr. Horne's commentary on the pſalms.

Difficulty of the prophetic writings. A caution concerning them. Dr. Horne's *wrong method of interpretation. Various inſtances of it. Remarks on them.*

OUR author's other work, on which I am to make ſome obſervations, ſeems to have

(*x*) Ver. 14. *Ipſe ſimiliter particeps factus eſt eorundem*, i. e. mortalis homo, et miſeriis obnoxius. Ver. 16. λαμβανεσθαι proprie aliquem manu apprehendere, ſignificat, et hinc ad opitulationem ſignificandum commode transfertur.

have been a very popular one, from its having come to a third edition. But although compoſed by him with a good deſign, it is liable to vaſt objections, from his very wrong method of interpreting the ſcriptures, and from his drawing aſide and miſleading his readers, from the worſhip of the true God. It is intituled;

'A commentary on the book of pſalms.'

'*In which their literal or hiſtorical ſenſe, as they relate to king David, and the people of Iſrael, is illuſtrated; and their application to Meſſiah, to the church, and to individuals, as members thereof, is pointed out; with a view to render the uſe of the pſalter pleaſing and profitable to all orders and degrees of chriſtians.* By George Horne, D.D. &c.'

It is aſſuredly a moſt becoming employment for a divine, and doing a real ſervice to chriſtianity, to endeavour to illuſtrate ſuch of theſe ſacred hymns as contain prophecies of Chriſt, and really relate to him. But too much caution cannot be uſed upon a ſubject, where there is ſo great danger of being deluded by a warm imagination. And therefore in the interpretation of this part

of

of the ſacred writings, as indeed of all others whatſoever, we ſhould take it as a thing certain, that no writer has any more than one ſubject in his thoughts at a time to diſcuſs, and one ſenſe to be fixed to his words; (unleſs he himſelf, or ſome one properly authorized indicate the contrary:) and this one ſenſe, which his words plainly convey we are to find out by the help of juſt criticiſm, and adhere to and reſt in it.

This is acting in agreement with that golden rule of interpretation, as Moſheim well ſtiles it, vol. iv. p. 21. inculcated by Luther; viz. that *there is no more than one ſenſe annexed to the words of ſcripture, throughout all the books of the Old and New Teſtament.*

But Dr. Horne forſaking theſe wiſe cautions and directions from the firſt, and paying little regard to the plain and literal meaning of the pſalms, employs himſelf in exhibiting their ſecret meaning and reference to Chriſt, intirely as it ſhould ſeem from the fund of his own imagination: for he gives no proof that any ſuch myſtic ſenſe was intended by their reſpective writers. In this way of interpreta-

interpretation, by which any thing may be made out of any thing, he very eaſily finds, as may be ſuppoſed, all his own peculiar notions and doctrines, largely and continually diſplayed in theſe ſacred ſongs; whilſt others can diſcover nothing of the ſort, neither in them, nor throughout the whole bible.

It may be proper to produce a few examples of his manner and method.

In his comment on the firſt verſe of the firſt pſalm, he brings in at the end of it, the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs as it is called, in a very ſingular manner, and though the words of the ſacred writer himſelf inculcates the contrary. *O thou ſecond Adam,* ſays Dr. Horne, *who alone, ſince the tranſgreſſion of the firſt, haſt attained a ſinleſs perfection; make thy ſervants* bleſſed, *by making them* righteous, *through thy merits and grace!*

Upon the firſt verſe of the ſixth pſalm, he thus teaches that ſtrange doctrine, ſubverſive of the moral attributes of the deity, the doctrine of vicarious puniſhment, and ſhews the innocent Jeſus appeaſing the anger

ger of the Father, by ſuffering for guilt not his own.

" Above, ſays he, is an angry God preparing to take vengeance; beneath, the fiery gulf ready to receive him; without him, a world in flames; within, the gnawing worm. Thus ſituated, he begins in extreme agony of ſpirit, *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* As often as we are led thus to expreſs our ſenſe of ſin, and dread of puniſhment, let us reflect on *him, whoſe righteous ſoul, indued with a ſenſibility peculiar to itſelf, ſuſtained the ſins of the world, and the diſpleaſure of the Father!*"

Pſ. xxxvii. 39, 40. *But the ſalvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their ſtrength in the time [of trouble. And the Lord ſhall help them and deliver them: he ſhall deliver them from the wicked, and ſave them becauſe they put their truſt in him.* One wonders what could lead our author thus to paraphraſe, and addreſs this to Jeſus Chriſt. 'Of thee, O Lord Jeſu, is our ſalvation; be thou our ſtrength in this mortal life, which is a time of trouble; help us againſt

our

our ſpiritual enemies, and deliver us from them; deliver us from the wicked one, and from all evil; and ſave us from the guilt and puniſhment thereof; becauſe we put our truſt in thee, and in thee alone."

Pſ. lxxii. 18, 19. *Bleſſed be the* LORD *God, the God of Iſrael, who only doth wondrous things. And bleſſed be his glorious name for ever and ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen.* Dr. Horne immediately proceeds in a very extraordinary manner to apply this paſſage to Chriſt. 'Bleſſed, therefore, ſays he, be thou, O Lord Jeſu; for *thou art the Lord God, even the God of Iſrael,* who haſt wrought ſuch miracles of mercy for the ſalvation of the church; and bleſſed by the tongues of men and angels be thy holy and glorious name; and let the whole earth be filled with the amazingly tranſcendent, and inconceivable majeſty of thy moſt excellent glory, for evermore! So be it."

Pſ. lxxviii. 38. *But being full of compaſſion, he forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not, yea many a time turned he his anger away,* &c. Dr. Horne accomodates this

this to Jeſus Chriſt, as the God of the Iſraelites then, and the God of chriſtians now. 'Be not angry, ſays he, o Lord Jeſu, for ever, with them or with us; but remember of what materials we are made, and into what a ſtate we are fallen; how weak and how frail we are; remember this, o Lord, and forgive us; and teach us to remember it, that we may forgive one another."

Pſ. lxxxiv. 1. *How amiable are thy tabernacles, o* LORD *of hoſts.* 'How amiable then, (adds Dr. Horne) may the chriſtian ſay, are thoſe eternal manſions, from whence ſin and ſorrow are excluded; —— where thou, o bleſſed Jeſu, LORD *of hoſts*, king of men and angels, dwelleſt in glorious majeſty, conſtituting by thy preſence the felicity of thy choſen!"

Pſ. civ. 1. *Bleſs the* LORD, *o my ſoul: o Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majeſty*, &c.

'The ſcripture informs us, proceeds Dr. Horne, that the ſame perſon, who redeemed the world, did alſo create it. In the ciid pſalm, we are aſſured by St. Paul, to the *Son*, it is ſaid, *Thou, Lord, in the beginning*

ning haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. To him, therefore, as creator, is the civth pſalm likewiſe addreſſed.'

Dr. Horne's reference here is to Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. But the attentive reader will find, that the author of the epiſtle does not apply the words of pſalm cii. 25. to Chriſt at all. But having mentioned the high dignity of Chriſt's office, and the benefits we derive from him, he inſtantly, in a way not unuſual with him, devoutly turns himſelf to God, from whom Chriſt, and all the bleſſings of the goſpel came, and applies the words of the pſalmiſt upon the occaſion, in acknowlegement of the divine power and goodneſs, and kind deſign to perpetuate thoſe bleſſings. See Emlyn's works, vol. ii. p. 340, 341.

Pſ. cxlv. 1, 2. *I will extol thee, my God, o king, and will bleſs thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy name for ever and ever.* 'The ſame divine perſon, continues Dr. Horne, who was, in a particular manner, the *God* and *king* of Iſrael, now ſtandeth in thoſe relations

lations to the gentile chriſtian church, and by her is *extolled* in the words of this pſalm, originally compoſed and uſed for that purpoſe among the Iſraelites. Chriſt is our God, who hath ſaved us, according to his covenant and promiſe; he is our *king*, who, &c.

Remarks.

Such and the like explanations and applications of the pſalms, which I have produced, and which make a large part of two volumes, you, who are unprejudiced, will at firſt ſight, perceive to be intirely foreign to the intent of the writers, and purely the fruits of lively imagination, and of the notions *(y)* with which

(y) In like manner, in pſalm cxix. 1. our author findeth the doctrine of original ſin; and ſadly marrs and mangles the beautiful affecting ſimplicity and piety of the pſalm throughout, by his ſpiritual chriſtian meanings thruſt upon it. To give one inſtance which the book opens upon.

Ver. 144. *The righteouſneſs of thy teſtimonies is everlaſting: give me underſtanding, and I ſhall live.* In every ſenſe, proceeds Dr. Horne, o Lord Jeſu, *thy righteouſneſs is everlaſting:*

with which Dr. Horne came prepoſſeſſed to the reading of them. As ſuch, they coſt no trouble, no expence of much thought or inquiry, but are rather a pious kind of amuſement; ſo that it is not to be wondered at that the doctor ſhould expreſs himſelf ſo delighted with the employment. And ſo far all would be very well, if his notions were confined to himſelf. But in the mean time, his rank in the univerſity, and the church, attract, and impoſe upon, readers, who never think or examine for themſelves; and who hold it a wonderful thing for a learned man to find out the goſpel preached even by David, in ſo large and particular a manner, as no one had ever heard of before: whilſt rational minds turn away from a ſyſtem of religion, ſo fanciful and precarious.

2. But the great point in which Dr. Horne will miſlead you, and all that implicitly

ing: grant me *the underſtanding* of it, in every ſenſe, and we ſhall live in thee now, and with thee for ever.

One is concerned to note, that many parts of this commentary on the pſalms conſiſt thus of *words without meaning*.

The hungry ſheep look up and are not fed.

implicitly follow him, is with reſpect to the God you are to worſhip.

It has been made, and it is, moſt apparent, that one ſingle perſon alone, is ſpoken of, and addreſſed in prayer, as GOD, throughout the ſacred writings, by patriarchs, prophets, by Moſes, by Jeſus Chriſt, and his apoſtles. Chriſt taught the heavenly Father, who was his father as well as of the reſt of mankind, to be the only true God. He worſhiped him and prayed to him himſelf, and directed his followers to pray to him; and never taught them that there was any other perſon who was God, or to be worſhiped.

Now in the face of this moſt glaring evidence to the contrary, Dr. Horne clothes our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt in the character of the moſt high God, which he was the fartheſt of all things from ever pretending to; prays to him perpetually; calls him God, LORD God, God of Iſrael, the LORD of hoſts; addreſſes him as poſſeſſed of all the attributes of the deity, and particularly of that of compaſſion and mercy.

3. This

3. This manner of praying to Jeſus Chriſt as God, the LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael, certainly makes two Gods, two LORD Gods, two LORDS of hoſts, two Gods of Iſrael, unleſs the God and Father of Jeſus Chriſt and of us all, is to be excluded from being God, LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael. And although Dr. Horne's prejudices and ſubtle metaphyſical diſtinctions, may prevent his perceiving, that he thus introduces, and acknowleges, and worſhips, two Gods; I cannot ſuppoſe that you yourſelves could pray to Jeſus Chriſt in theſe characters, and dreſſed in theſe attributes, and then invoke the heavenly Father in the ſame way, and by the ſame characters, and not be moſt fully perſuaded that you were praying to two Gods. But you know, that this is forbidden and condemned by the higheſt authority in the univerſe; I AM JEHOVAH THY GOD; *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but* ME.

4. What a ſcene of inexplicable confuſion and perplexity is here introduced! According to Dr. Horne, the chriſtian world has hitherto been miſtaken, in imagining,

for inſtance, the pſalms civth, cxlvth, to be addreſſed to the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the LORD God, God of Iſrael, who made the world. For the doctor finds theſe titles to belong to Jeſus Chriſt, and affirms him to be the object, in whoſe honour theſe hymns were compoſed, and who is invoked in them.

How then ſhall we direct our thoughts? you will naturally inquire. To whom ſhall we turn ourſelves in ſinging theſe divine ſongs? whoſe praiſes are we to celebrate? Are we to lift up our hearts to Jeſus, and to exclude the heavenly Father, declared by Jeſus to be the only true God? Or has Dr. Horne any rule to give us, when we are to addreſs our devotions to the one, when to the other? what pſalms belong to the one, what to the other?

5. You cannot but remark, what a blemiſh is hereby fixed upon the goſpel, and ſtumbling block thrown before thoſe who reject it, that after a period of near 2000 years, when it's founder, the holy Jeſus, gave his ſanction to the deciſion of his predeceſſor, Moſes, the divine law-giver of the

jews

jews (*t*) (Deut. vi. 4. Mark xii. 29. 32.) that Jehovah, their God, was one Jehovah;

(*t*) I cannot here forbear citing a very ſerious and ſolemn remonſtrance upon this moſt important object, by a late eminent miniſter of the church eſtabliſhed, Mr. Hopkins, above-mentioned; eminent for thoſe virtues which will highly diſtinguiſh and promote him in the future world, though his condition and circumſtances here, were always low and narrow, and particularly at the cloſe of his long, laborious, uſeful life.

In his note on Exodus xx. 3. after having remarked, that the chriſtian lawgiver, our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, had eſtabliſhed by his expreſs authority the ſolemn declaration of Moſes, Deut. vi. 4. by adopting and reinforcing his very words, concerning the divine unity, he proceeds to ſay: 'By what rightful authority have the greateſt mortals determined, that there are two other perſons equally intitled to honour, worſhip, and glory with the one Supreme God, and that they, together with him, form one Supreme Being? A doctrine abſolutely inconſiſtent with the principles of reaſon, and expreſsly contrary to above two thouſand texts in the Old Teſtament, and above a thouſand in the New, (I ſpeak upon examination) which either ſtrongly ſet forth, or neceſſarily imply, the *Unity* of God in the ſtrict literal ſenſe. I am afraid that the Athanaſian doctrine and worſhip ſeems little leſs than a breach of the covenant eſtabliſhed between God and the Jewiſh people in the Old Teſtament, and between God and all mankind in the New. The governors of the church ſhould be exhorted in the moſt earneſt manner, to take ſpeedy and effectual

it ſhould be the doctrine of all the great churches in chriſtendom, not excepting the proteſtant

fectual methods to review our public forms, and reduce them to the ſtandard of ſcripture. In the beginning of the litany, there are invoked FOUR diſtinct objects of religious worſhip; which form of worſhip has not the leaſt foundation, or even colour of evidence to ſupport it, from the beginning of the Old to the end of the New Teſtament: and the learned of all denominations are challenged to produce any acts of religious worſhip to FOUR diſtinct objects.'

'The Ten Commandments are read in the morning ſervice of all the churches of England and Ireland every Lord's day; and at the ſame time a doctrine and form of worſhip are kept up in expreſs contradiction to the firſt commandment.'

'Chriſtian profeſſors have often condemned the jews for their prejudices and blindneſs, that they do not ſee and acknowlege the Meſſiah, of whom there are ſo many clear prophecies delivered in their own ſcriptures. On the other hand the jews, I think, may with equal juſtice retort a ſimilar charge upon great numbers of profeſſed chriſtians, who though they are perpetually reading, or hearing read, the ten commandments, in the firſt of which God is declared to be one, in words not poſſible to be interpreted in any other ſenſe, yet in defiance to the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt light, they preſume to acknowlege and worſhip THREE co-equal Gods in one ſubſtance. If the New Teſtament really maintained this abſurd corrupt doctrine,

it

proteſtant church of England, and particularly at this hour maintained by Dr. Horne, a diſtinguiſhed and approved dignitary in it; that the humble and pious Jeſus is Jehovah, Jehovah God, the Lord God, whom all are to worſhip; ſo that he is at the ſame time a worſhiper of God, and the God who is worſhiped. And you are thus, according to Dr. Horne, to worſhip a man-God, a creature-God, one acknowleged to have been like ourſelves, as the moſt high; inſtead of HIM, who is *inviſible, eternal, whom no one hath ſeen nor can ſee, who dwelleth in the light which no one can approach*: who hath ſaid, *To whom will ye liken me? and to whom*

it would be an unanſwerable argument that it never came from God, it being impoſſible that the two Teſtaments ſhould contradict each other in this grand fundamental article, the UNITY of God, on which all true religion is founded. But to our rational ſatisfaction, Moſes and Chriſt are fully agreed in maintaining this eſſential doctrine, as we have already ſeen; and it is the expreſs duty of all churches through every part of the globe, to remove all forms that break in upon the important point of the UNITY of God.

ſhall I be equaled (*u*). *I am Jehovah, and none elſe; beſide me there is no God,* Iſ. xl. 25. xlv. 5.

6. In the midſt of the frequent devotional addreſſes, ſcattered throughout theſe two volumes of Dr. Horne's upon the pſalms, although beſides Jeſus Chriſt, there is another God often named; yet I have not obſerved one inſtance of prayer being offered up to that other God; but all to Jeſus Chriſt, who is ſtiled God, the LORD God, the LORD of hoſts, &c. This cannot but make deep impreſſion on you, and upon all thoſe who may be

(*u*) I AM *Jehovah, and none elſe: beſide* ME *there is no God.* This very circumſtance, *viz.* the uſe of the ſingular pronoun, whenever God *ſpeaks*, or *is addreſſed*, or *named*, is itſelf a full demonſtration, that there is but one ſingle perſon who is God, to the excluſion of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all others. There is no taking refuge here in a pretended reverence for God, and ſaying, that we ought not to pry with too curious eyes into the divine nature. For as the point in queſtion is confeſſed not to be knowable by nature's light, but to be of divine revelation, we muſt ſtudy the words which convey it to us, and examine them as we do the words of any other books; and they, we thus ſee, upon the face of them, and no leſs, on the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny, are found to teach the divine unity in the moſt abſolute ſenſe, that *there is one Jehovah, and his name one.* Zech. xiv. 9.

be inclined to put implicit faith in him, as a moſt learned man, and head of a college, and endanger your offering up your devotions to a man like yourſelves, as God almighty; eſpecially as he is repreſented full of mercy and goodneſs, and the contrary quality of anger is attributed to the other God ſpoken of in theſe commentaries.

From what ſource ſoever Dr. Horne derived this worſhip and practice, it is not certainly to be found in the bible, and therefore is moſt reprehenſible, if that ſacred book is to be regarded as our ſtandard and directory.

SECTION XVI.

The reply of the Students to Dr. Horne.

I HOPE now, ye virtuous youth, and diligent inquirers after truth, that it is not too much for me to preſume, that the foregoing arguments may have ſwayed ſo much with ſome of you at leaſt, that, in your turns, you would be diſpoſed to expreſs yourſelves to Dr. Horne, for his pamphlet and addreſs to

Dr.

Dr. Prieſtley, in your names, in ſome ſuch manner as the following.

The ſtudents of Oxford *and* Cambridge, *to* Dr. Horne, *preſident of* Magdalen College, &c.

Hon. and Rev. Sir,

"We are extremely obliged to you for condeſcending to put on your undergraduate's gown for a while to ſerve us, and to preſerve us from what you apprehend to be hurtful and erroneous doctrine, which Dr. Prieſtley would teach us.

"But we think you much miſtaken, though we are perſuaded of your good intentions, in making us to ſay, that we think it right to declare our belief, that every thing contained in the liturgy and articles of our church is agreeable to the word of God, before we have inquired and examined, whether it be ſo, or not. And although it be the way, in which you began your own theological ſtudies, it is far from recommending itſelf to us on that account, as it ſeems to us to have had an unhappy influence

ence upon yourſelf, and your own improvements.

" We find alſo, that you have not mentioned ſome facts, which ſhould have been made known to us. For that ſo far are things from being rightly conſtituted with reſpect to our church's articles and liturgy, as you would make us believe, that ſome of the wiſeſt and beſt members of it, have wiſhed for, and endeavoured to promote a reformation in many things of great conſequence, and among theſe ſome of the learned men that are now upon the epiſcopal bench.

" We muſt conclude therefore, that the way of authority, and of ſubmitting to the deciſions of fallible men like ourſelves, in what concerns our holy religion, which you propoſe to us, is not the way of arriving at the truth, in the judgment of perſons of higher rank in the church than yourſelf; and we fear, that it has been the reaſon that for ſo many ages its progreſs has been retarded.

" So far then from thinking Dr. Prieſtley ſo much to be blamed as you would make him for having no fixed creed, we are conſtrained to think you yourſelf highly blameable for having fixed your creed in the manner

ner you have done, and for endeavouring to fix our's for us in the manner you do. On the contrary, we are convinced, that we ought never to have our opinions ſo unchangeable as you would make them, but to have our minds open to conviction, and to change of ſentiment, whenever we ſee reaſon for it.

"Although we do not diſlike mirth and drollery in its ſeaſon, and admire your talent in this reſpect, we do not think it a proper way of making reply to what is ſupported by reaſon and ſerious argument, and therefore we do not approve the application of it in the letter you have written to Dr. Prieſtley for us.

"For, whatever you imagine, we think it far from being a matter to be treated with levity, to ſearch and diſcover, as far as we can, who, and what is the Being that made us; to whom, it is, that we are to direct our prayers, and to depend upon. Whether we are to pray to three perſons, or to two perſons, or only to one? And alſo to procure all the ſatisfaction we can concerning the character of the God that made us, and

and the nature of his divine adminiſtration: whether he be, of himſelf, perfectly good, and merciful, and benevolent; and not ſtanding in need of another perſon to make him kind and forgiving to his frail, repenting creatures of mankind; which appears to be your opinion.

"You frequently accuſe thoſe that are called Socinians, of torturing the language of ſcripture, and ſtretching it to quite another meaning than the ſacred writers intended. But we fear this accuſation will recoil upon yourſelf. For it has been proved upon you, ſir, that you have not been ſufficiently attentive to acquaint yourſelf critically with the ſacred writings, as you would have done in order to interpret an ode of Horace, or a paſſage in Tacitus, or Thucydides. To this we cannot but attribute your having miſtaken ſo many texts in the bible, and particularly your having been ſo much overſeen in the ſenſe which you have put upon St. Paul's epiſtle to the hebrews.

"It is this want of a proper and critical ſtudy of the ſacred writings, that we fear, has made you intirely to overlook the true condition

dition and character of Jeſus Chriſt, ſo as to make him the ſupreme God, whilſt he ſeems ſo plainly and continually to declare himſelf, and is declared throughout the ſcriptures, to have been one of our race, and a mighty prophet and meſſenger of the great God.

" But, Sir, what moſt of all aſtoniſhes us, is your making Jeſus Chriſt to be the LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael, to whom the ſacred writers of the pſalms addreſſed themſelves. We cannot divine, how you can be ſatisfied in this, when there is not any the leaſt token or ſign of it to be gathered, from the book of pſalms, or any other of our ſacred books. How are we to reconcile this your praying only to Jeſus Chriſt, and calling him, God, LORD God, LORD of hoſts, &c. when Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, (John xvii. 3.) praying to the Father, calls him, THEE, *the only true God!* thereby, by the perſonal pronoun, confining the title intirely to one perſon? are we in contradiction to this, to worſhip two Gods? For ſurely we cannot exclude the Father from being the only true God. We wiſh to be

relieved

relieved by you, Sir, out of this perplexity, into which you have thrown us."

We are, &c. your obliged,

Poſtſcript.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt.*

HAVING omitted the mention of this work of Dr. Prieſtley's in its proper place, when recommending to you his theological writings, I ſhall take the preſent opportunity of ſaying ſomething of it, the moſt curious and valuable of them all: and I riſque nothing in adding, that it could only be executed in the manner it has been done, by a ſuperior genius, like his own; and alſo one, who to ſo much patient, unremitted induſtry, could add ſo many ingenious devices and mechanical arrangements to abridge his labour in ſorting the vaſt materials before him, ſo as to finiſh in a few years, what would have required very many in the ordinary way, without ſuch invention.

HERETOFORE, many chriſtians, who ſaw that there was no foundation in the ſcriptures for

ſor the divinity of Chriſt, or for his being any thing more than a man with an extraordinary commiſſion and power from God, did not know what to make of ſome the earlieſt chriſtian writers embracing a contrary opinion, *viz.* of his having preexiſted, before he was born of his mother Mary, at Bethlehem in Judea.

This difficulty Dr. Prieſtley ſolved in a moſt ſatisfactory manner, in the former part of his '*Hiſtory of the corruptions of chriſtianity*;' by ſhewing, that this early unſcriptural doctrine concerning Chriſt, aroſe intirely from a few learned heathen converts, who mixed their philoſophy with the goſpel; and by proving alſo from authentic hiſtory, that the whole body of jewiſh chriſtians, converted by the apoſtles themſelves, did not believe either the divinity, or the preexiſtence of Jeſus Chriſt. From which it is indubitably to be inferred, that the apoſtles never taught ſuch a doctrine concerning Chriſt; as it is out of every degree and limit of probability, that they who had been taught by them, ſhould have ſo immediately deſerted their doctrine, upon a matter

matter ſo important. And he ſhewed this opinion to have been at firſt nearly univerſal among gentile as well as jewiſh chriſtians, theſe few philoſophizing men excepted.

He alſo pointed out by what ſteps theſe men were drawn on to make Jeſus Chriſt the ſupreme God; which, in the ſpace of three centuries, they accompliſhed: but could not, all the while, bring the bulk of chriſtians to accede to their doctrine, who continued to be unitarians, ſuch as the apoſtles themſelves, and the firſt converts to the goſpel.

This work of Dr. Prieſtley's, was not ſuffered to paſs without being controverted by ſeveral perſons, among whom Dr. Horſley, lately promoted to the ſee of St. David's, much diſtinguiſhed himſelf; though by no means to his credit with learned men, and judges of the ſubject. For perhaps there hardly ever was an inſtance, in which a controverſial writer, was ſo intirely baffled, and confuted in every thing advanced by him, both from ſcripture, and early antiquity, to invalidate Dr. Prieſtley's poſitions; as has been verified with reſpect to Dr.

Horſley. And this is the opinion of not a few among the learned, who are far from favouring Dr. Prieſtley's peculiar ſentiments. To form a true judgment yourſelves of the caſe, I would refer you to Dr. Prieſtley's Letters to Dr. Horſley, Archdeacon of St. Alban's, Part ii. and Part iii: to which, in point of honour, and for the ſake of truth, he ought to make a juſt reply; or to give up the cauſe, and own he cannot defend it.

In conſequence of this diſcuſſion of the ſubject with Dr. Horſley, yet not with a view to add to his triumphs over him, but for his own ſatisfaction, and that of others, the learned more eſpecially, Dr. Prieſtley undertook this his laſt herculean work (*a*). In this he has brought to light, and diſplayed a vaſt accumulation of evidence, unknown before, "to prove the truth and the antiquity, as he himſelf ſpeaks, of the proper unitarian doctrine, in oppoſition to the trinitarian and arian hypotheſes;" deriving his information from the firſt ſources only, having

(*a*) "The hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus "Chriſt, compiled from original writers, proving that the "chriſtian church was at firſt unitarian, in four vols. 1786."

having peruſed all the original authors from the beginning, and produced almoſt 2000 paſſages from them; and having many others in reſerve, equally important, if needed, to eſtabliſh the facts for which he pleads.

Concerning however this large *field*, or more juſtly to ſpeak, this overgrown *wood* of chriſtian antiquity, which our author alone hath cleared up, and in which he hath made ſuch diſcoveries; I would beg leave to obſerve to you;

1. That before he led the way, we were all much in confuſion, and had no diſtinct ideas concerning that great corruption of the goſpel, and of genuine chriſtianity, called *Arianiſm*; I mean the doctrine which makes Jeſus Chriſt to have been a great preexiſtent ſpirit, next to the eternal God, and deriving his being from him; who condeſcended to come into this world of ours, and to animate a human body, ſhrunk from his original dignity and power, firſt into the ſtate of an embrio, next into that

of an helpleſs infant, till by degrees he became rational, &c. &c.

This doctrine, which has no countenance in the ſcriptures, but in a very few paſſages, of plainly wrong interpretation, Dr. Prieſtley has proved not to have been known in the chriſtian church, till about the time of *Arius*; and has likewiſe ſhewn that the doctrine of the platonic fathers concerning Chriſt, which probably firſt began with Juſtin Martyr, or about his time, and has been miſtaken for it, was quite another thing: Chriſt, according to them, not being a ſuperangelic ſpirit, animating a human body, but the logos, the wiſdom or reaſon of the divine being, his attribute, which theſe philoſophers made a perſon of, and which, according to them, bore the ſame relation to the Father, that the platonic νους, which was their ſecond principle, bore to the firſt principle, uſually called αγαθος; or rather were the ſame with them. This they held to be intimately united to Jeſus Chriſt, who was ſtill a man, in their ſyſtem, with a body and ſoul like the reſt of us. *(b)*

I muſt

(*b*) In the firſt ſection of the concluſion of The hiſtory of the early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt, vol. iv. p. 273, you,

I muſt own, that this wild, abſtracted perverſion of the true ſcripture-doctrine concerning Chriſt is to me leſs exceptionable, and leſs repugnant to reaſon, than the *arian* doctrine concerning him; which is a heap of incongruous, ſtaggering improbabilities, from beginning to end: whether you ſuppoſe the great preexiſtent ſpirit, which was ſhut up in a human body of fleſh and blood for 30 years, to have been the firſt and principal of created beings, and the ſubordinate creator of all things; or, one of an inferior claſs, with inferior powers.

2. *The diſtinction of the opinion of the early writers from that of the common people* was never before obſerved by any one; and being a thing wholly unknown to the firſt Socinians, they were exceedingly embaraſſed in the defence of their ſentiments, in point of antiquity. But we here ſee the ſeeming gap and chaſm filled up, and that the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning their divine

you have a clear and diſtinct account of the ſucceſſive gradations of this platonic doctrine, till it ended in making Chriſt the moſt high God.

divine maſter being altogether one of the human race, was alſo the doctrine of all thoſe that were immediately taught by and ſucceeded them, a few ſpeculative men excepted, who would be wiſe *above what was written*.

3. The variety of curious knowlege of facts and opinions, contained in this work; the illuſtrations of the oriental philoſophy; and the doctrine of Platoniſm in particular never ſo well exhibited before, muſt be pleaſing and inſtructive to all, who wiſh to know the hiſtory of the human mind, an intereſting hiſtory aſſuredly: ſo that throwing even the queſtion of religion aſide, it is a valuable acceſſion to the literary world, but connected with that important object, it is above all price.

In a work of ſuch compaſs and extent as this *hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt*, in which you have the words of the original writers themſelves, it was ſcarce to be expected that no miſtakes would be committed. The author foreſaw it to be unavoidable, and deſired all allowance to be made, and to be told his faults, and he would

would gladly correct them. They have however turned out much fewer than could have been imagined, and none of them in the leaſt affecting his main propoſitions and concluſions, though he has been told of them in an unhandſome way. But in whatever way it may come, it will be acceptable to him to hear of any errors or overſights, be they of greater or ſmaller conſequence. With reſpect to the unworthy inſinuations of ſome men, all that know any thing of Dr. Prieſtley, believe and are perſuaded, that he would as ſoon be guilty of robbing on the highway, as of deſignedly miſquoting or miſinterpreting any paſſage in an antient writer to deceive others, and ſerve the purpoſe of a private party or opinion. For he has no intereſt in view, but that of truth, nor any deſires but to have that in the beſt way promoted and eſtabliſhed.

F I N I S.

BOOKS printed for J. JOHNSON, *No.* 72, *St. Paul's Church-yard*;

By the Rev. Mr. Lindsey,

I. APOLOGY for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, Yorkshire. Fourth Edition. Price 3s. sewed.

II. SEQUEL to the APOLOGY, &c. Price 6s. boards.

III. An HISTORICAL VIEW of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worship, &c. Price 6s. in boards.

By Dr. Priestley.

I. INSTITUTES of Natural and Revealed RELIGION. Two vols. Price 10s. in boards.

II. LETTERS to a Philosophical Unbeliever. Two vols. Price 7s. boards.

III. An HISTORY of early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ. Four vols. Price 1l. 4s. in boards.

IV. LETTERS to Dr. HORSLEY, Archdeacon of St. Albans. Three Parts. Price 7s. 6d. boards.

TO THE

STUDENTS

OF

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

INTRODUCTION.

The neceſſity of a ſerious application of the mental powers to God, and our duty. Prejudices againſt Dr. Prieſtley *removed. The intent of the following work.* Mr. Hawkins, *the* Bampton-*lecturer's very reprehenſible way of ſpeaking of the ſcriptures, of the apoſtle* Paul, *and of* Jeſus Chriſt. Juſtin Martyr, *the firſt bringer-in of more gods than one, among chriſtians. Good and ſenſible men how deceived. A juſt repreſentation of the ſacred writings of importance.*

I.

THE proper buſineſs of a rational creature is to make inquiry after the benevolent Power that made him, and to find out in what manner he may beſt recommend himſelf to his favour.

But whilſt ſome whole nations are for the preſent left unprovided with the means of this ſalutary knowlege, and multitudes in all countries need to be excited to make uſe of the light imparted to them; peculiarly favourable is your ſituation, ye ſtudious youth, in thoſe your loved retreats, on ſlow-winding *Cam*'s fair banks, or by *Iſis*' ſilver ſtream, where Wiſdom opens to you all her ſtores; preſenting you with the learned labours and example of ſages of antient and modern times, who have ſought the great creator in his volume of nature, where every inſect, herb and pebble, beſpeaks his power and goodneſs, and ſkill divine; and alſo affording helps, and leiſure, to interpret for yourſelves the written pages of his revealed will.

To this purſuit, of all others the moſt delightful and enchanting to a virtuous mind, every thing prompts and invites you: your time, the place, ſet apart, and devoted to it; nay the very walks and groves cry out and reproach you, as you paſs along, as unworthy to live and expatiate in them, if you waſte away your precious hours in indolence, or vice: *Withdraw; theſe hallowed ſeats, and pleaſing, venerable*

venerable walks, belong not to you: give place to others! (a)

Theſe your ſuperior advantages, you are bound to cultivate with all your power, not for yourſelves only, but for the good of others; for nothing is given for the uſe of the individual only: that you may be the inſtruments of conveying knowlege, and the moſt laſting happineſs to your dark or torpid fellow-mortals. For this is the method of the Divine Being, in carrying on his deſigns of virtue and the moſt perfect felicity for his creatures, to make them ſubſervient and uſeful to each other.

 And

(a) Let me not here paſs you over in ſilence, without moſt ardent vows for your proſperity, ye riſing youth of *New College*, *Hackney*'s ſtudious ſeats, not without the ſtill ſequeſtered walk, though almoſt within the hearing of the buſy hum of the thronged metropolis: where you are initiated into the higher forms of learning, by her different profeſſors, without ſlaviſh ſubjection to the dictates of fallible men, in your ſentiments, and worſhip of the great Creator. May you ever be trained up to act your parts with propriety, dignity, and uſefulneſs to your country, in your ſeveral ranks and ſtations; and may ſome continually from among you go forth, and become the happy inſtruments, in a long ſucceſſion of ages, of carrying knowlege and arts, virtue and true religion over the globe!

And you ſhould the more earneſtly labour after the higheſt attainments in ſcience, and the moſt ardent benevolence for others, becauſe you know not to what great and eminent degree of uſefulneſs you may be called, in theſe *great times*, in which you live; in this opening of a new and golden age for truth and liberty, and freedom from every oppreſſion, and fetter upon the human mind.

II.

MAY I hope, that it was not in vain attempted in a former addreſs, to ſilence the alarm given you by a *(b)* worthy perſon under narrow, unhappy prejudices, of danger to be apprehended from a peruſal of the works of *(c)* one man, from whom as philoſopher, metaphyſician, moraliſt, and divine, there is ſo much to be learned, not elſewhere to be found; whoſe life is ſpent in inveſtigating and communicating important truth to the world; and in guarding and defending it afterwards

(b) Dr. Horne, head of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Dean of Canterbury.

(c) Dr. Prieſtley.

terwards, (eſpecially in what relates to the honour and ſole worſhip of the one only true God and creator of all things, as taught by the holy Jeſus), againſt thoſe who are for keeping up the kingdom of darkneſs for ever; and who is actuated by the pureſt views to ſerve mankind in their beſt intereſts, and to theſe ends devotes his time, and thoſe powers with which heaven hath diſtinguiſhed him. There would be no end of referring you to, and pointing out the excellency of his numerous tracts hitherto unmentioned. His

His *Lectures on Oratory* abound with curious original matter and remarks, drawn from the beſt philoſophy, and mark the inventive powers of their author. His *Lectures on Hiſtory*, are a preliminary book to thoſe ſtudies, which was wanted in our language, and is not equalled in any. His *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* is intended only as a more popular work, written with a fidelity and impartiality never before ſeen, in noting the progreſs of religious opinions, accompanied with reflections and obſervations on men and things, peculiar to a comprehenſive mind like his.

You will enjoy great ſatisfaction and benefit in peruſing his various writings in controverſy on theological ſubjects, all in defence of rational and juſt ſentiments of moral duty, and of the true characters of God and of Jeſus Chriſt, as taught in the ſacred writings; his Treatiſe on Education; his Diſcourſes from the pulpit, which ſhew a mind moſt enlightened, and that he has himſelf imbibed the true ſpirit and temper of the goſpel, which he ſtrives to inſtill into others; his *Appeal*, and all his leſſer pieces, &c. &c. In a word, that perſon will have made no ſmall advances in ſcience and in virtue, who has read and approves Dr. Prieſtley's writings.

III.

In the firſt chapter of this work, I preſent you, as I formerly *(d)* engaged, with a ſample of the right method of interpreting the ſacred writings, applicable to every ſubject treated on in them, though here confined to one only, *viz.* the perſon and character of Jeſus Chriſt; who, and what ſort of being he

(d) Vindiciæ Prieſtleianæ, &c. p. 2.

he was, in the midſt of the mighty controverſies that have been for ages agitated concerning him: the diſcuſſion involving in it of courſe the queſtion concerning the true God and object of worſhip. And I ſhall be happy, if I have ſucceeded, in delivering a fair ſtate of the evidence, and in pointing out the concluſions which infallibly flow from it.

IV.

I HAD entertained a deſign alſo of propoſing to you ſome examples of the *wrong* methods of explaining the ſacred oracles, induced to it by obſerving the turn, which an author *(e)*, in a very public ſituation, had juſt then given to many texts, relating to God, and to Jeſus Chriſt, and to the holy Spirit; and imagining that it might be of ſervice to him and to his readers, to ſhew the many miſtakes into which he had fallen.

But on a nearer inſpection, I found, that no reply likely to be of any uſe, could be made to one, who had ſo ſtrongly imbibed

(e) Mr. Hawkins's Diſcourſes at the Bampton-Lecture, for the year 1787.

the notion of a *Trinity of three, efficient, living, intelligent perſons, the ſovereign cauſes and rulers of all things*, as to fancy this trinitarian doctrine to have been current before the ſcriptures were written, and to be ſo neceſſary to explain them, that he ſcruples not to ſpeak very magiſterially of, and even to cenſure thoſe ſacred writings, if his own chimerical notions are not to be admitted.

'If, ſays Mr. Hawkins, p. 59, this doc-
'trine, (*i. e.* of Chriſt's divinity) was the
'doctrine of the church, previouſly to the
'publication of the holy writings, they are
'ſufficiently full and explicit for the ſatis-
'faction, or confirmation of chriſtians of all
'ages; if otherwiſe, *here is more than enough*
'*to perplex and miſguide them, and to lead*
'*them into errors of the firſt magnitude.*

This avowal of Mr. Hawkins, that the doctrine of Chriſt's divinity was not ſufficiently declared in the ſacred writings, makes it evident that thoſe who receive only what thoſe writings teach, cannot argue with him, or ſet him right in any thing.

In another place, ſoon after, he ſpeaks with as little reſpect of St. Paul, as he here does

does of the ſacred writings, if the apoſtle does not allude to *his* imaginary *trinity*, of three intelligent, living perſons. It is in his remark on Paul's farewel ſpeech, or apoſtolical charge, as our author calls it, to the elders of Epheſus. In this ſpeech it cannot be doubted that God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are deſcribed, as two diſtinct, living, intelligent perſons; but then, Jeſus Chriſt, not as on a level with the Almighty, not as the Lord God Almighty; but ſuch a *Lord*, as God *had made* him, Acts ii. 36; and as he is characteriſed by St. Luke throughout his hiſtory. Mr. Hawkins indeed cites the 28th verſe; *Take heed—to feed the church of* GOD, *which he hath purchaſed with his* OWN *blood*, as being really the words of the apoſtle himſelf; *(f)* making him to countenance the notion, firſt, of Chriſt being God; and next, the ſhocking idea of God ſhedding his blood, and dying. But ſcholars ſhould be aſhamed of

(f) The moſt judicious and impartial critics agree, that the apoſtle's words, were; either, *feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with the blood of his own Son:* or, *feed the church of the Lord*, (i. e. Chriſt) *which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.*

of abetting ſuch acknowleged *falſe readings* of ſcripture. The apoſtle, it muſt be confeſſed, ſpeaks alſo of the holy ſpirit, as a perſon, *witneſſing*, and appointing perſons to particular offices among them. But the uniform tenor of St. Luke's language in this book, and of the language of the bible throughout, ſhews, that by the *holy ſpirit* in ſuch inſtances, is not to be underſtood, a living, intelligent agent, but the extraordinary power of God at that time beſtowed on chriſtians, and by a very common figure of ſpeech, perſonified, ſpoken of as a perſon. And thus *the holy ſpirit witneſſed in every city*, that St. Paul was to ſuffer impriſonment, &c. that is, it was ſignified by men who had the gift of the holy ſpirit, or who had a divine knowlege conferred upon them, in this inſtance. And the holy ſpirit *(g)* had made (or conſtituted) the men, whom

(g) Le Clerc here well remarks, that the reaſon of the apoſtle's uſing this language, was, becauſe the teachers or biſhops of each congregation were at firſt eſtabliſhed by the apoſtles under the direction of the holy ſpirit. Parceque les apôtres, ou leurs premier diſciples, n' etabliſſoient aucun evangeliſte ou evêque, que par l' inſpiration du S. eſprit. Voyez 1 Tim. iv. 14.

whom Paul addreſſed, ſuperintendants of the church, or congregation of chriſtians at Epheſus; becauſe they were appointed to that office, by the apoſtles, or by men that were under a divine impulſe, or the direction of the holy ſpirit of God.

You will now judge of the propriety and decorum of Mr. Hawkins's treatment of the apoſtle upon this occaſion. 'If we ſuppoſe, 'ſays he, p. 111. this apoſtolical charge to 'have been delivered to perſons *pre-inſtructed* in 'the myſtery of the goſpel, agreeably to our 'repreſentation of it; *i. e. to have been be-* 'lievers in the holy Trinity, it muſt be ac- 'knowleged to contain words of *perſpicuity,* 'truth and ſoberneſs; *but on every other ſup-* 'poſition, muſt not St. Paul have been thought 'by his audience, to have been beſide himſelf?'

But Mr. Hawkins does not confine his indecent reflections to the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament in general, as being written only to perplex and miſguide; or to the apoſtle Paul's being a madman, if they and he had not a ſecret reference to his curious invented doctrine of a *Trinity of three efficient, living, intelligent perſons, the ſovereign cauſes and rulers*

lers of all things; but our Saviour himſelf muſt be aſperſed, if his own heatheniſh ſyſtem concerning him, be not true. 'It will 'corroborate what has already been advanced, 'ſays he, in his annotations, p. 313. to re-'mark farther, that if Jeſus Chriſt be any 'thing leſs than very God, by eternal ge-'neration, *he was abundantly overpaid* for all 'he did and ſuffered for our ſakes; *he was re-'compenſed beyond all meaſure*, by his exalt-'ation to the right hand of the majeſty on 'high; and by the divine honour and wor-'ſhip which has been univerſally aſcribed and 'paid to him.'

Without entering into the exact meaning of the metaphorical expreſſion of *ſitting at the right hand of God*, we may not heſitate to ſay, that Mr. Hawkins would have found that he overrated it, and that it did not imply any honour above that to which a human creature might aſpire, if he had conſidered, that our Saviour himſelf ſays, Matt. xix. 28. that when the Son of man ſhall *ſit on the throne of his glory*, his twelve diſciples ſhould alſo *ſit upon twelve thrones*: and that, in another place, to encourage *all* his followers

to

to aim at the higheſt attainments of virtue, and fortitude in ſuffering in the cauſe of truth, he declares by a divine authority, Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to* ſit with me in my throne, *even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my father on his throne.* Here, by the way, you ſee the *ground* of Chriſt's exaltation, whatever is to be underſtood by it; namely, that it was his conſummate virtue and obedience to the ſupreme Father; which marks, without all doubt, his creature-like condition; and this language he uſes concerning himſelf in the ſtate of his higheſt exaltation in heaven.

As to the divine honour and worſhip paid to the bleſſed Jeſus, which Mr. Hawkins ignorantly reckons ſo much upon, it is no more than has been, from early times, and is ſtill given to his mother Mary, to name no other. And if, in both caſes, it be equally undue and condemnable, becauſe uncommanded in ſcripture, and contrary to the firſt of the commandments of God, given to Moſes, and republiſhed and recognized by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; it can be no credit to either of them, whilſt it is a diſgrace to their worſhippers for

their

their ſupineneſs in not making a better uſe of their reaſonable faculties, on ſo momentous a ſubject. Nay, *ſi quid mortalia tangunt*; if in that other world there be any knowlege of what is paſſing here, which we know not well how to conceive but that our Saviour muſt be in ſome degree or other poſſeſſed of: we cannot help thinking, but that it muſt give him ſome concern, to know of ſuch an indignity caſt upon the Almighty Being, by his followers putting himſelf, his creature and ſervant, on an equality with him, and rendering him equal honours. Alſo at the laſt ſcene of this preſent world, when the dead ſhall be raiſed, his mother Mary, who was a virtuous excellent perſon in her day, will be affected and humbled, if we may judge by our own feelings now, by the ſenſeleſs worſhip which her ſon's diſciples for ſo many ages have rendered to her, and ſtill render.

But thus it is, and ever will be, where men adopt ſyſtems concerning the Divine Being, from human authority, without reaſon, and without a proper ſtudy of and attention to the ſcriptures. When they afterwards find, that theſe ſcriptures are not to be reconciled to, but

but plainly contradict their favourite notions, inſtead of thinking that they themſelves might poſſibly be miſtaken, you find them cenſuring and vilifying the ſacred penmen and their writings, and not ſparing Chriſt himſelf, if their interpretation of his words be not true. Theſe paſſionate expreſſions concerning him, much reſemble the railings and other freedoms, which the heathens were wont to uſe and take with their falſe gods, when they did not pleaſe them, and things did not happen as their votaries expected. And it is only to be excuſed in both, as being the reſult of *indelible ſuperſtition (b)*, nouriſhed in them from their infancy,

(b) Sparrman, in his voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, gives us a curious inſtance of the kind, vol. i. p. 208. "Many of the coloniſts, ſays he, have likewiſe aſſured me, that their *Boſkies-men* of either ſex, uſed in ſtormy weather, to abuſe the thunder in moſt reproachful expreſſions, and at the ſame time in a furious manner, with their ſhoes or any thing elſe that was at hand, menace and bid defiance to the flaſhes of lightning and peals of thunder that exploded and rolled over their heads. It would be in vain to try to make them ſenſible, that the vegetable creation, whence they and the brute animals, were nouriſhed, would without rain, wither, and be intirely dried up: even the Hottentot I afterwards took into my ſervice at Zwellendam, obſtinately

infancy, without ever ſuffering themſelves to examine into the grounds of it.

Characters, with no extraordinary powers from God, however meritorious and excellent, cannot be expected to receive better treatment, when they come in the way of men of ſuch violent unreaſonable prejudices. Accordingly, Mr. Hawkins, having made mention before of Mr. Locke, ſays of him ſarcaſtically, p. 67. 'Nevertheleſs, the *great philoſopher* 'above mentioned, leaves the introduction to 'this goſpel of St. John, and other paſſages 'in it of equal import, intirely unnoticed, as 'though it had no connection with his ar-'gument; which is a piece of *diſingenuouſ-'neſs* that one cannot avoid ſaying, did little 'credit to his cauſe, or to himſelf.' And again,

ly perſiſted, in ſpite of all my objections, in the opinion, that notwithſtanding this conſideration, rain was always an evil, and that it would be a happy circumſtance were it never to rain. A maxim of this kind from a race of men, in other reſpects really indued with ſome degree of ſenſe, and frequently with no ſmall ſhare of penetration and cunning, ought, methinks, to be conſidered, as *an indelible religious, or ſuperſtitious notion, entertained by them from their infancy*, rather than as an idea taken up on mature deliberation and conſequent conviction."

again, p. 69. 'By Mr. Locke's way of proceeding, *viz.* arbitrarily admitting, or rejecting ſcripture, we may mould chriſtianity into what form we pleaſe; and to this way of proceeding, among other cauſes, we are to aſcribe the various ſchiſms and hereſies, which have ſo long, and ſo deplorably divided the chriſtian world.'

This imputation of diſhoneſt dealing, in a thing which to a good mind would appear the moſt flagitious, *i. e.* in interpreting the word of God; is brought againſt this eminent perſon, of the moſt unblemiſhed integrity, for this reaſon, among others, becauſe he did not agree with Mr. Hawkins, in reckoning the perſon, whom St. John, at the end of his goſpel, xx. 31, calls the *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, to be the ſame with him, whom, at the beginning of it, he ſtiles the *Word*, that *was with God*, and *was God*.

But might not Mr. Locke, without ſubjecting himſelf to ſuch a charge, take the *Word*, in this prœm of St. John's goſpel, not to be deſcriptive of Chriſt, but of the Almighty and infinite Being himſelf, under his character of Wiſdom, as I truſt has been

proved to be the real intent of the evangeliſt, in the following work. It ill becomes creatures, the ſlaves of a thouſand prejudices, as we are, when any one differs from us, (eſpecially on religious ſubjects, in which we ought to believe all men ſincere, unleſs we have the fulleſt aſſurance to the contrary) immediately to declaim againſt them, as if the heart was in fault, and they had ſome unfair deſign in it. This is not following our maſter's golden rule, Matth. vii. 12.

Mr. Hawkins being ſenſible that our Lord in his life-time, was unqueſtionably looked upon, by many of his diſciples, in no higher a light than that of a prophet, or divine meſſenger, after ſome aukward conceſſions of the kind, ſatisfies himſelf nevertheleſs, 'that our 'Saviour's reſurrection, p. 65. by virtue of 'his own as well as his Father's power, 'cleared up a thouſand difficulties in a mo-'ment, and amounted to a full demonſtration 'of his divinity.' We may not doubt of this being the effect, produced by the awful event in our author's mind; but it certainly had no ſuch effect upon any of the apoſtles, or firſt chriſtians, of whom we have any authentic

thentic accounts. This I perſuade myſelf, has been fully made to appear, in the ſubſequent work, by a minute examination of every paſſage relating to the ſubject, in St. Luke's ſecond treatiſe, and hiſtory of the goſpel, continued for upwards of thirty years after our Lord's reſurrection. And I have great ſatisfaction in having been put upon this particular inquiry by Mr. Hawkins, as it has given me an opportunity of drawing forth and exhibiting, even beyond my own expectation, the moſt overwhelming evidence of the following facts, clear and plain to every underſtanding, and which all men, who believe the ſcriptures, ſooner or later muſt bow down to and acknowlege: namely;

1. That there is ONE GOD, one ſingle perſon, who is God, the ſole creator and ſovereign lord of all things;

2. That the holy JESUS was a man of the jewiſh nation, the ſervant of this God, highly honoured and diſtinguiſhed by him; and,

3. That the SPIRIT, or HOLY SPIRIT, was not a perſon, or intelligent being; but only the extraordinary power or gift of God, imparted, firſt (Acts i. 2.) to our Lord Jeſus

Chriſt himſelf, in his life-time; and, afterwards, to the apoſtles, and many of the firſt chriſtians, to impower them to preach and propagate the goſpel with ſucceſs: and

4. That this was the doctrine concerning God, and Chriſt, and the holy Spirit, which was taught by the apoſtles, and preached to jews and heathens.

V.

The ſcripture being thus moſt plain and expreſs upon the ſubject of the Divine Unity, of there being one ſingle perſon only who is God, and creator and governor of all things; it muſt appear very aſtoniſhing to thoſe, who have not leiſure or means to examine into the hiſtory of the chriſtian church, how it was poſſible for them, at ſo early a period, to vary ſo much from the ſcripture, eſpecially with reſpect to the perſon of Chriſt, as ſome among them actually did.

This is the ſubject of inquiry, in the ſecond chapter of this treatiſe; in which Juſtin Martyr is aſſigned as the firſt who aſcribed divinity to Chriſt, by maintaining (ſee p. 171) 'that before his works of creation, God produced

'duced from himſelf a rational power or a-'gent,' ſtiled in ſcripture, God, the Word, the Son, &c. who was his inſtrument in the creation, and his ſubſtitute and repreſentative afterwards, in the appearances made to the patriarchs, and at the giving of the law to Moſes, &c. and was afterwards united to the man Chriſt Jeſus.

In what way, and from what ſource it was, that the prejudices of learned chriſtians, at that time, led them to entertain ſuch a ſtrange idea of Chriſt, has been very clearly ſhewn by Dr. Prieſtley, who, above all men, has the talent of making abſtruſe things plain to ordinary capacities. See his Hiſtory of the Corruptions of Chriſtianity, vol. i. ſection ii. *(i)*

(i) The title of this ſection, is; 'Of the firſt ſtep that 'was made towards the deification of Chriſt, by the per-'ſonification of the Logos.'

The doctrine of theſe early philoſophic chriſtians, was; that the logos, *i. e.* the *word*, the *reaſon*, the *wiſdom* of the Father, which had been in him from all eternity, was made a perſon a little before the creation, and employed by the Almighty in the creation, and government of the world, and afterwards became man.

'Thus Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, ſays Mr. Whiſ-'ton, after philoſophy came in, ventured to affirm that the 'Son

In that ſection he has thrown out in a general way, what had been obſerved alſo by others, and I thought it might be of ſervice to ſee it more particularly explained, concerning Juſtin, that he was the man, who miſled all antiquity, in reſpect of the true character, and perſon of Chriſt.

Should it not however be allowed, that Juſtin was the firſt author and inventor of this great corruption of the chriſtian doctrine, and was copied in it by thoſe that came after him, which I am myſelf perſuaded of, and have aſſerted by arguments that appear ſatisfactory: the fact will nevertheleſs be true, that all antiquity

' Son was in a ſecret manner in the Father, *before* his ge-
' neration or creation; and that he was made out of a *part*
' *of the ſubſtance* of the Father, as Tertullian aſſerts. And,
' in another place, he remarks, more explicitly; That ſort
' of *eternity* of the Son of God, of which ſome of the fathers
' began to ſpeak towards the latter part of the ſecond cen-
' tury, was plainly, not a real exiſtence, as of a Son pro-
' perly coeternal with his Father, by a true eternal gene-
' ration; but rather a *metaphyſic exiſtence*, *in potentia*, or in
' the like higher and ſublimer manner *in* the Father, as his
' *wiſdom*, or *word*, before his real creation or generation;
' which real creation or generation was then even ſuppoſed
' to be a little before the creation of the world.' Primitive Chriſtianity revived, vol. i. pref. p. vii. lxix.

tiquity have blindly followed in the track that he ſtruck into, in direct deviation from the ſcriptures, whoever, or whatſoever led them into it.

I flatter myſelf that this inquiry, which I have been led to make, will be both uſeful and pleaſant. Thoſe who wiſh to know the true ſtate of facts, and what relates to the moſt important thing in the world, the religion they profeſs, will be glad to ſee what arguments were uſed by a worthy man ſo near the time of the apoſtles, by which, in a courſe of time, all the world was turned away from the true ſcripture-doctrine concerning Jeſus Chriſt. I have alſo given ſome little account of the eminent chriſtian writers who immediately followed, and who copied him in this matter; and have given ſome inſtances of their dogmatic ſtile in writing, dealing intirely in aſſertions without proof, by which this polytheiſm of Juſtin's was carried on.

And theſe remains of the early *fathers*, as they are called, are to be cheriſhed, preſerved, and ſtudied by us; becauſe they ſhew, upon what principle, from what prejudices, and through what ignorance, miſrepreſentation,

and perverſion of the ſacred writings, they were miſled to apply parts of thoſe writings, to Chriſt, which did not belong to him, and thereby to make him quite another being than what he really was.

A proper obſervation of theſe facts will quiet the minds of chriſtians, with reſpect to the great and important errors, which obtained ſo early in their religion; I mean, particularly, that of the worſhip of Chriſt, as a ſecond God; which has now been common among the greater part of chriſtians near 1500 years.

As they will perceive that ſuch worſhip of more Gods than one, began from Juſtin's perverting the ſcriptures from their true ſenſe, and planting his own heathen philoſophy upon them: they will be ſo far from dreading, (which has been the caſe with many,) that true religion will be hurt by extirpating ſuch errors, of however ſo long ſtanding; that they will have the good ſenſe to ſee, that it can only be hurt by letting them continue to grow. And ſo far from being offended with thoſe, who tell them, that they have all their lives long been bowing to and worſhiping thoſe who are no Gods, they will be thankful,

ful, and eſteem it the greateſt favour, to be ſet right in ſuch important points; and will be ready to reaſon thus calmly and candidly on the ſubject.

'If I were a worſhiper of the virgin *Mary*, 'and accuſtomed to pray to her daily, as all 'the members of the greek and romiſh 'churches are bound, and are wont to do; 'I certainly ſhould not think it amiſs for any 'one in a friendly ſort, to remind me of my 'error, and give me reaſons, why I ought no 'longer to pray to a dead woman, who can-'not hear or help me.

'I ought not then ſurely to take it ill of 'thoſe, who lay before me no leſs ſtrong 'reaſons from the ſacred writings, why I 'ought not to pray to *Jeſus (k)*, the Son 'of *Mary*; who, although not dead, but 'raiſed to life by the power of God, is ſtill 'a human being, nor has any power given 'him to hear our prayers, and to help us.'

The

(k) Jeſus the Son of Mary] So is our Lord called by St. Luke, after his reſurrection from the dead, and aſcenſion into heaven. Acts. i.

The idea which chriſtians entertained at firſt of God, and of Chriſt, were plain and ſimple; ſuch as we have ſeen, and ſuch as are delivered in the old and new Teſtament. By degrees, the learned, who followed Juſtin's notion of a ſecond God, prevailed over common chriſtians, who were taught by the apoſtles; and adopted other ideas of the deity, ſuch as were not taken from the word of God, but from philoſophic and ſcholaſtic learning: which latter conſiſts chiefly of words without meaning. But every thing of importance is delivered in ſuch plain and clear terms in the bible, that there is juſt reaſon to diſtruſt all doctrines concerning God, which require a great deal of acuteneſs and ſubtlety to be made uſe of to explain them.

One is concerned to ſee that truly apoſtolical character, Archbiſhop Tillotſon, with his good underſtanding, intangled in this cobweb ſophiſtry of the ſchools, ſo as not to be able to extricate himſelf.

In his "Sermon concerning the unity of "the divine nature, and the bleſſed Trini-"ty," &c. vol. i. p. 488. it is obvious, to what a degree, this moſt worthy perſon impoſed

poſed upon himſelf, by the abſtruſe terms *nature, the divine nature.* Of the natural attributes of God, and his moral perfections, if we may ſo ſpeak, (for all our language concerning HIM muſt ever be imperfect,) *viz.* his power, wiſdom, and goodneſs; if in theſe the *nature* of the deity be ſaid to conſiſt, we gain ſome knowlege thereof from our reflections and reaſonings on our own frame, and on the world around us, and ſtill more from his revealed word. But if by *nature*, be underſtood that internal conſtitution of things and beings, which makes them ſeverally what they are, we certainly know nothing of our own nature, or of that of the moſt inconſiderable thing about us, much leſs of the *divine nature.* And it is remarkable, that ſo far from giving us inſtructions in any thing of this kind concerning the Divine Being, our Saviour himſelf did not even teach the exiſtence and unity of God, but referred men to what Moſes had taught before him, Mark xii. 28, 29. 30. from whoſe writings doubtleſs he had drawn his own knowlege on this great ſubject. So that aſſuredly our Lord came not, was not commiſſioned, to teach us

any

any thing concerning the *divine nature*, but concerning the divine will and benignity towards us; and what it is that he requireth of us to do, for our good always, and to ſecure his everlaſting favour.

If then the Archbiſhop had not impoſed on himſelf by uſing words without meaning, *viz.* the *unity of the divine nature*, inſtead of the *unity of the Divine Being*, his honeſt mind and good ſenſe would have led him to ſee, that this latter unity cannot be predicated of, cannot belong to more perſons than one. And he would have avoided that diſgraceful concluſion of his ſermon, in which however of courſe, he has been followed by others, namely; "There is one God: To *him*, 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, be all honour, &c.' Here, to call *Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, HIM; is in violation of every rule of grammatical concord, of arithmetic, and of common ſenſe; and what would not be excuſed even in a ſchool-boy.

The LAST CHAPTER of this work exhibits a catalogue of thoſe falſe readings of the ſcripture,

ſcripture, and wrong tranſlations of it in our engliſh bible, which countenance the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Divinity of Chriſt.

As I have prefixed remarks to that part in it's place, it will not be needful to add any thing farther here. But I ſhall content myſelf with obſerving; that thoſe who have not leiſure for theſe inquiries, have a juſt claim upon others for the fruits of their ſtudies. And if the ſacred writings, eſpecially thoſe of the New Teſtament, through neglect or deſign, have been depraved and altered, as moſt aſſuredly they have been, ſo as to make them lean to the doctrine of more Gods than one, it is a duty to point out, and to make underſtood, where ſuch corruption of the truth hath taken place; that no longer two Gods, equal to the Father, *i.e.* the Son and the holy Spirit, unknown to prophets and apoſtles, brought into the chriſtian church by heathen men full of falſe ſcience, may be named or heard of among chriſtians: and that at length, the knowlege and worſhip of the one, only true God, the Father, and ſole creator of all things, taught and practiſed by the bleſſed Jeſus and his apoſtles, may be reſtored,

reſtored, and obtain throughout the whole world.

I muſt not omit to acknowlege, that I take much blame to myſelf, for having, in the former part of this work, without juſt grounds, included Dr. Price in biſhop Butler's gloomy concluſions concerning the character of the moral Governor of the world; whoſe notions in this reſpect that excellent perſon is as far from approving, as from countenancing the biſhop's metaphyſical ſuperficial way of introducing two new deities among chriſtians, without ever in any proper way conſulting the Bible about them; which he would have found to condemn every thing of the ſort.

I ſhould indeed be in pain, if in any thing of importance to morals, or true religion, I differed from Dr. Price; whoſe judgment and heart I muſt ever honour; who from the firſt of my coming to ſettle in this great city, has been one of my chief friends; whom to know is the ſame as to eſteem and love; one, in whoſe ſociety you are ſafe, eaſy, improved and happy, and therefore his friendſhip is coveted by all; and who, whilſt

a few

a few by ſpeaking not ſo well of him, make eminent virtue pay only her wonted tax, enjoys the approbation of all the wiſe and good of his own country, for his excellent principles, and defences of civil and religious liberty, and is held in grateful eſteem and veneration by foreign nations.

TO

A SECOND ADDRESS

TO THE

STUDENTS OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE,

RELATING TO

JESUS CHRIST,

AND THE ORIGIN OF THE

GREAT ERRORS CONCERNING HIM;

WITH A LIST OF THE

FALSE READINGS OF THE SCRIPTURES, AND THE MISTRANSLATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO SUPPORT THOSE ERRORS.

BY THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, M. A.

FORMERLY FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

"Surely I ought to know the God whom I worship, whether he be one, pure and simple being; or whether Thou art a threefold deity, consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Dr. Watts's solemn Address to the Deity.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

MDCCXC.

THE CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE neceſſity of a ſerious application of the mental powers to God, and our duty. Prejudices againſt Dr. Prieſtley *removed. The intent of the following work. Mr.* Hawkins, *the* Bampton-*lecturer's very reprehenſible way of ſpeaking of the Scriptures, of the apoſtle* Paul, *and of* Jeſus Chriſt. Juſtin Martyr, *the firſt bringer in of more Gods than one among chriſtians. Good and ſenſible men how deceived. A juſt repreſentation of the ſacred writings of importance.*

CHAPTER I.

SECTION I.

Page

The knowlege of Chriſt *treated of in this work* 1

SECTION II.

The evidence of St. Matthew *concerning the perſon of* Jeſus Chriſt - - - 10

COROLLARY - - - 21

Page

SECTION III.

The evidence of St. Mark *concerning the perſon of* Jeſus Chriſt - - - - - 21

SECTION IV.

The evidence of St. Luke *concerning the perſon of* Jeſus Chriſt - - - - 22

COROLLARIES *deducible from the teſtimonies of the three former evangeliſts concerning our Lord* Jeſus Chriſt - - - - 23

SECTION V.

The evidence of St. John *concerning the perſon of* Jeſus Chriſt - - - - 25

Of the introduction to St. John's *goſpel.*

A new tranſlation, and paraphraſe of the Preface to St. John's *goſpel, with remarks* - 34

Corollaries, and illuſtrations of the foregoing interpretation of John i. 1.—14. - 42

SECTION VI.

Of the other paſſages in St. John's *goſpel, which are ſuppoſed to prove* Chriſt *to have exiſted in a former ſtate* - - - - 56

Page

Of the teſtimony of John the Baptiſt *to* Chriſt 58

Of the paſſages in St. John's *goſpel, containing thoſe words of* Chriſt *himſelf, which are ſuppoſed to prove his having exiſted in a former ſtate* - - - - - 59

The phraſes, coming down from heaven, being ſent from God, being ſent into the world, coming into the world, coming forth from the father, proceeding forth and coming from God; *when uſed of himſelf by* Chriſt *in* St. John's *goſpel, ſignify only his having a divine commiſſion, the being an extraordinary divine prophet and meſſenger* 64

Of the Son of man aſcending up where he was before - - - - - 69

Of Chriſt being before Abraham - - 71

Of Chriſt having glory with the Father before the world was - - 77, *&c.*

Of Thomas's *ſaying to* Chriſt; my Lord and my God - - - - 80

COROLLARY - - - - 83

SECTION VIII.

Of the deſign of St. Luke's ſecond treatiſe, called the Acts - - - - - 84

Page

SECTION IX.

Of the ſum of St. Luke's *teſtimony concerning God and Chriſt, in his hiſtory, called* The Acts - - - - - 126

SECTION X.

Of the ſentiments of the apoſtles, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as recorded by St. Luke *in* The Acts - - - - 127

COROLLARIES *deducible from the foregoing facts* - - - - 128

SECTION XI.

St. Luke's *record of the manner in which the goſpel was firſt preached to the heathen world* - - - - 133

COROLLARIES *deducible from the foregoing facts* - - - - 135

SECTION XII.

The worſhip of the truly primitive church, made up of the apoſtles, and their friends, as recorded by St. Luke *in* The Acts 138

COROLLARIES *deducible from the foregoing account* - - - - 139

Page

CHAPTER II.

SECTION I.

Of the first corruption of the true doctrine concerning Jesus Christ, *in the time of the apostles* - - - - 144

SECTION II.

Of the corruption of the true doctrine concerning Jesus Christ, *by* Justin Martyr - 147

SECTION III.

Whence it was that Justin Martyr *brought into christianity his new doctrine of* Christ *being the logos, the word, an inferior God and creator* - - - - 149

SECTION IV.

Of Justin's *manner of proving* Christ *to have been an inferior God, and creator of the world, under the supreme Father of all* - 153

SECTION V.

Justin's *way of proving* Christ *to have been concerned in the creation of the world* 154

Page

SECTION VI.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to* Abraham *in the plains of* Mamre - - - - 156

SECTION VII.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been one of the two* Jehovahs, *whom he ſuppoſes to have been engaged in the deſtruction of* Sodom 158

SECTION VIII.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to* Jacob *at* Luz - 161

SECTION IX.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to* Moſes, *and called himſelf, the* God of Abraham, *&c.* - 162

SECTION X.

Of Juſtin's *ignorance, and miſtake, in reſpect of the phraſe,* angel of God, angel of Jehovah - - - - - 164

Page

SECTION XI.

Of Juſtin's *additional proof, that it could not be the Almighty Being himſelf, who appeared to* Moſes - - - 167

SECTION XII.

Of Juſtin's *way of proving to the emperors, that it was* Chriſt, *and not the ſupreme Being himſelf, who appeared to* Moſes - 168

SECTION XIII.

Of Juſtin's *way of proving* Solomon *to ſpeak concerning* Chriſt, *in* Proverbs viii. - 170

COROLLARY - - - 173

SECTION XIV.

Of the cauſe of Juſtin's *aſſerting in ſo very poſitive and peremptory a ſtile, that* Chriſt *was the agent of the Deity at the creation of the world, and in its government of it afterwards* - - - - 175

SECTION XV.

Whence it was that Juſtin *took up the idea of his being inſpired in this reſpect* - 179

Page

SECTION XVI.

Juſtin *was the inventor of the doctrine of* Chriſt's *preexiſtence, and of his being the agent of the Deity, in the Old Teſtament* - 181

SECTION XVII.

The early chriſtian writers who came after Juſtin, adopted from him this notion, of Chriſt being the agent, and repreſentative of the Deity in the Old Teſtament - 185

SECTION XVIII.

Of Irenæus's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt - - - - - 187

SECTION XIX.

Of Clemens Alexandrinus's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt - - - 190

SECTION XX.

Of Tertullian's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt - - - - 195

SECTION XXI.

Of Euſebius's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt - - - - 198

Page

SECTION XXII.

Of the perverſion of the meaning of the hebrew ſcriptures, by theſe antient fathers, as they are called - - - - - - 204

SECTION XXIII.

Of the influence of Juſtin's *character, and peremptory aſſertions, over ſome eminent modern chriſtians* - - - - 207

SECTION XXIV.

Of the dazzling plea from antiquity, in favour of this notion of Juſtin, *concerning* Chriſt - - - - - - 211

CHAPTER III.

INTRODUCTION.

The teſtimony of the apoſtles concerning the Divine Unity, *and the character and condition of their lord and maſter* Jeſus Chriſt, *as being intirely one of the human race. The cauſe of the early falling away of chriſtians from this doctrine of the apoſtles.*

The

Page

The plainneſs of this doctrine concerning God *and* Chriſt, *as laid down in the ſcripture. A rule by which every one may be able to decide for himſelf concerning it. By following this rule many chriſtians became* unitarians *at the beginning of the reformation, and many are now returning to the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning* God *and* Chriſt. *This happy effect will ſtill more be ſeen, when one great impediment is removed, by mens' having the ſcriptures fairly laid before them in their mother-tongue* — 217

FALSE READINGS, *or alterations of the words of ſcripture in favour of* a Trinity of divine perſons, *and eſpecially of* the Divinity of Chriſt, *made with deſign, or through miſtake, by copyiſts or tranſcribers, before the art of printing was invented* — 235

MISTRANSLATIONS *in our engliſh bible, favouring the doctrine of a Trinity, and of the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt* — 249

CONCLUSION — — 304

TO THE

TO THE

STUDENTS

OF THE

TWO UNIVERSITIES.

CHAPTER I.

SECTION I.

The knowlege of Chriſt treated of in this Work.

THE moſt important knowlege of Jeſus Chriſt, is that, of which St. Paul diſcourſes in ſuch lofty ſtrains, (but for which all deſcription is too low) when he prays for his friends at Epheſus, Eph. iii. 18. 19. that they might *be able to comprehend with all chriſtians, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the ſurpaſſing love of the knowlege of Chriſt*: i. e. that they might become acquainted, and properly impreſſed, with that ſtupendous benignity of the heavenly Father of all, which moved him to make the holy Jeſus his honoured inſtrument in bring-

ing the whole race of mankind to virtue, and an eternal felicity. Goodneſs, beyond all thought; for creatures of yeſterday, ſuch as we are, to be put into a capacity of living again when theſe preſent ſcenes ſhall be over, and of living for ever! The mind muſt be dead, as a ſtone, to whatever is great, and good, and excellent, that is not excited thereby not to loſe ſuch immortal hopes.

This is the knowlege of Chriſt, in which we are moſt intereſted; and which is alone ſpoken of in the ſacred writings. And for ever bleſſed and honoured be the name of Jeſus, eſpecially by us of mankind! who after a laborious life, ſpent in teaching men virtue, and true religion, was willing to reſign it in the extremeſt torments, for the ſame great end; that we might be alſo ready (1 John iii. 16.) *to lay down our lives*, to exert every benevolent endeavour to promote the virtue and happineſs of others.

But there is another knowlege of Jeſus Chriſt, namely, who he was, and among what claſs of beings he is to be ranked, concerning which he never ſeems to have had the leaſt apprehenſion, that there would be any diverſity of opinion among his followers: and yet no ſmall diſſention about it began in the days of his apoſtles; and in proceſs of time, it was carried to great height and violence, owing chiefly to the interference of the magi-

magiſtrate in taking upon him to decide in a matter intirely out of his province: ſo that from the year of our Lord 325, to the preſent year 1790, it has been in a high degree penal, in all chriſtian countries, openly to diſſent from what the civil powers eſtabliſhed as the true doctrine concerning Chriſt. In our own country, the puniſhment was being burnt alive, untill ſo late as the reign of Charles II: and the penalty at this day is impriſonment, with many grievous and cruel diſabilities, was the law ſuffered to have its courſe. So that to fix ourſelves rightly in a juſt knowlege of Chriſt, is, on many accounts, a very ſerious buſineſs.

In the bible, from whence alone authentic information can be drawn, the queſtion, who Jeſus Chriſt was, ſeems the plaineſt of all others, and eaſily ſolved, by thoſe who can peruſe that book without prejudice.

But to what a degree the ſubject has been intangled by the wit and ingenuity of thoſe, who were led to believe that there was ſome great myſtery contained in it, and how much wiſe and good men have been embaraſſed by it, you will perhaps beſt ſee in an inſtance, that has recently been laid before the public.

The late pious and juſtly celebrated Dr. Watts *(a)*, left behind him a ſhort tract, to be publiſhed after

(a) The public who wiſh thoroughly to know Dr. Watts's character, and ſentiments, and who have no opportunity of peruſing

his death, and which moſt probably contained his laſt ſentiments relating to this point. It is drawn up in the form of a prayer to God, and intitled, 'The Author's Solemn Addreſs to the great and 'ever bleſſed God, on a review of what he had 'written in the Trinitarian controverſy.' The picture of a truly devout mind, in ſuch a ſituation, is moſt curious, and edifying; as we have the ſentiments of the heart laid open with all ſincerity before God, being not intended to be ſeen by any one whilſt he lived: and it is impoſſible to contemplate it, without being deeply affected with that ſtate of perplexity, and uncertainty, in which this worthy perſon repreſents himſelf, after all his reſearches, whether the God whom he was to worſhip, conſiſted of one or more perſons, if we may ſo ſpeak. I ſhall ſelect a few paſſages.

P. 101. "*Permit me, O God and Father, to plead with thee concerning the revelations of thy nature and thy grace, which are made in thy goſpel: and let me do it with all that humble reverence, and that holy awe of thy Majeſty, which becomes a creature in the preſence of his God.*"

P. 102.

peruſing his voluminous works, are under great obligations to the ingenious author of "The Life of the Rev. Iſaac Watts, D.D. by Samuel Johnſon, LL.D. with notes, containing animadverſions and additions. London, 1785." From this publication the citations are here made.

P. 102. —— "*Haſt thou not aſcribed divine* (b) *names, and titles, and characters to thy Son and thy holy Spirit in thy word, as well as aſſumed them to thyſelf? And haſt not thou appointed to them ſuch glorious offices as cannot be exerciſed without ſomething of divinity or true godhead in them? And yet, art not thou, and thou alone, the true God? How ſhall a poor weak creature be able to adjuſt and reconcile theſe claſhing ideas, and to underſtand this myſtery? Or muſt I believe, and act, blindfold, without underſtanding?*"

P. 104. "*I yield myſelf up joyfully to this method of thy ſalvation, as it is revealed in thy goſpel.* But I acknowlege my darkneſs ſtill. *I want to have this wonderful doctrine of the all-ſufficience of thy Son and Spirit, for theſe divine works, made a little plainer. May not thy humble creature be permitted to know what ſhare they can have in thy deity? Is it a vain and ſinful curioſity to deſire to have this article ſet in ſuch a light, as may not diminiſh the eternal glory of the unity of the true Godhead, nor of the ſupremacy of Thee, the Father of all?*

P. 105. "*Hadſt thou informed me, gracious Father, in any place of thy word, that this divine doctrine is not to be underſtood by men, and yet they were*

(b) The reader may ſee this particular argument urged with great ingenuity, and anſwered in An Examination of Mr. Robinſon of Cambridge's plea for the divinity of Chriſt. Printed for Johnſon, St. Paul's Church-yard.

required to believe it, I would have ſubdued all my curioſity to faith.—But I cannot find thou haſt any where forbid me to underſtand it, or to make theſe inquiries.——I have therefore been long ſearching into this divine doctrine, that I may pay thee due honour with underſtanding. Surely I ought to know the God whom I worſhip: whether he be one pure and ſimple being; or whether thou art a threefold deity, conſiſting of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit?

P. 107. "*Thou haſt called the poor and the ignorant, the mean and fooliſh things of this world, to the knowlege of thyſelf and thy Son.—But how can ſuch weak creatures ever take in ſo ſtrange, ſo difficult, and ſo abſtruſe a doctrine as this; in the explication and defence whereof, multitudes of men, even men of learning and piety, have loſt themſelves in infinite ſubtilties of diſputes, and endleſs mazes of darkneſs? And can* this ſtrange and perplexing notion of three real perſons going to make up one true God, *be ſo neceſſary and ſo important a part of that chriſtian doctrine, which, in the old teſtament, and the new, is repreſented as ſo plain and eaſy, even to the meaneſt underſtandings?*

P. 111. "*Help me, heavenly Father; for I am quite tired and weary of theſe human explainings, ſo various and uncertain. When wilt thou explain it to*

to me thyſelf, O my God, by the ſecret dictates (c) of thy ſpirit, according to the intimations of thy word?——I intreat, O moſt merciful Father, that thou wilt not ſuffer the remnant of my ſhort life to be waſted in ſuch endleſs wanderings, in queſt of thee and thy ſon Jeſus, as a great part of my days have been; but let my ſincere endeavours to know thee, in all the ways whereby thou haſt diſcovered thyſelf in thy word, be crowned with ſuch ſucceſs, that my ſoul being eſtabliſhed in every needful truth by thy holy ſpirit, I may ſpend my remaining life according to the rules of thy goſpel, and may, with all the holy and happy creation, aſcribe glory and honour, wiſdom

(c) It was the misfortune of this worthy perſon, to have received ſuch a deep impreſſion of the doctrine of a Trinity, from his education in his youth, of there being three divine perſons making up one true God, that it cleaved to him through life, though he was at times wavering about it. He had been taught to call it a myſtery, as the fabricators of it might well term it; underſtanding thereby a thing difficultly, or not at all to be comprehended. This turned his pious mind to apply to heaven to have his doubts removed, by ſome ſecret divine aid and illumination. But no illuſtration of any revealed doctrine can be expected from Almighty God in any other way than by a diligent ſtudy of the ſacred writings, which contain it. Unhappily Dr. Watts was perplexed all his life, in looking into thoſe writings, for what was not to be found in them; as hath been often ſhewn by many, and I truſt will fully appear to every one who peruſes this preſent work.

and power to thee, who ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

Thus this eminent Divine, ingenious in a high degree, and ſtudious to the laſt, with acuteneſs, and critical talents equal *(d)* to the inveſtigation of the true ſenſe of the ſacred writings, as he greatly excelled in the art of recommending its truths to the heart; after all his labour and reſearches, appears to have gone out of the world, unſettled and unſatisfied with reſpect to the God he was to worſhip. He could not diveſt himſelf of his early prejudices in favour of the received interpretation of certain texts, relating to Chriſt and the holy ſpirit; ſtill thinking ſomething of *divinity or true godhead*, as he ſpeaks, belonging to the Son and Spirit, and yet not able to reconcile it to that ſtrong conviction of the Divine Unity, of the ſingle perſon of the God and parent of all, with which he ſeems deeply penetrated throughout the whole of his prayer.

It is then a point of importance to ſettle, who Jeſus Chriſt, the founder of our religion, was: whether one of the human race, gifted with extraordinary divine powers, or a great angelic ſpirit, exiſting before all ages; or is he God, equal to the ſupreme? A ſolution of this queſtion, ſuch as all

(d) See a fine ſpecimen of this in his note on Matt. xxviii. 19. a few pages below.

all may agree in, cannot but be deſireable, and acceptable to all ſerious perſons.

There are ſome who condemn all ſuch diſquiſitions, as ſerving only to perplex mens minds, upon a matter about which they ſuppoſe they will continue to quarrel, as they have hitherto done, to the end of time. And it is confeſſed, that there might be cauſe to deſpair of adjuſting the long diſpute, if right methods had been purſued, and failed. But this I truſt to be able to ſhew has not been done. Thoſe perſons, who have taken the lead in, or given the vogue to the doctrine, which makes Chriſt to be the eternal God, or the firſt of beings next to him, and his inſtrument in the creation, have conſulted the ſcriptures with an undue biaſs upon their minds, with a ſyſtem of opinions already formed, and derived from other ſources. As the true philoſophy of nature, or an acquaintance with the great Creator's works around us, can only be advanced by building knowlege upon fact and experience: ſo can our knowlege of what it has pleaſed him ſupernaturally to diſcover to us, of himſelf, and his deſigns, be alone obtained by ſearching the records that contain thoſe diſcoveries; and it is remarkable, that much within the ſame period of about a century and a half paſt, by going upon the ſame ground in both caſes, a greater inſight into the natural ſyſtem hath been acquired than in all preceding ages, and more alſo hath been accompliſhed

towards a right underſtanding of the ſacred volume during the ſame interval, than ſince the time of the apoſtles, eſpecially in our own country.

We are however ſtill but new in the buſineſs. Much remains to be done, by farther critical inquiries, to ſhew, to the ſatisfaction of all, what were the ſentiments of the apoſtles concerning their lord and maſter, how the language of ſcripture was underſtood by thoſe, for whoſe uſe it was immediately written; and how Chriſt's countrymen, and coremporaries, interpreted, what he ſpoke concerning himſelf, or what his apoſtles ſaid of him: which ſeems to be the way of coming at the knowlege of what he taught, and of who he really was.

SECTION II.

The evidence of St. Matthew concerning the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.

To know then who Chriſt was, we muſt go to thoſe who have given an account of him, and who had the opportunity of obtaining full information upon the ſubject, at the time, and upon the ſpot, where and when he lived: who were alſo perſons of probity and good ſenſe; and whoſe works have come down to us with ſufficient exactneſs

exactneſs and authenticity. Such are the four evangeliſts, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There is a difference of opinion, among learned men, with regard to the date of their reſpective writings; but it is probable, that they drew up and publiſhed their memoirs of their divine maſter, nearly at the ſame time.

Matthew, whoſe goſpel is firſt placed, was our lord's countryman, and one of his apoſtles; and by living and converſing with him, during the greateſt part of his public miniſtry, had the means of being well acquainted with the things that he relates of him. And he deſcribes him altogether, as a human being; a deſcendant of Abraham and David, their two great progenitors; born of his mother Mary as other infants, only produced in her, by the extraordinary power of God, as the firſt of our race was formed; in other reſpects reſembling the reſt of us, living and dying: ſo that no one would, or did take him for any other than one of mankind, with high powers from God, and a commiſſion, to teach his will, and the way to eternal life.

You will find but two paſſages in his goſpel, that carry even the appearance of Chriſt being to be deemed, originally, any other than a human creature, however now deſervedly exalted in the divine favour. Theſe muſt be briefly conſidered, leſt they ſhould be thought to have more weight than they really have.

The

The firſt is, Matth. i. 23. *Behold a virgin ſhall be with child, and ſhall bring forth a ſon, and they ſhall call his name, Emanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.*

Theſe words are from Iſaiah vii. 14: and were no more intended by the prophet to foretell any thing concerning Chriſt, than the words ſoon after cited by our evangeliſt, ii. 17. 18, from Jeremiah xxxi. 15. were to predict the grief and concern of the parents, whoſe children Herod had put to death. But they are both quoted by the apoſtle, (after the manner of the jews in thoſe times, who loved to cite their ſacred books on all occaſions,) as containing ſomething that might be accommodated to the preſent purpoſe. Nothing however can be more groundleſs than to ſuppoſe, that becauſe the apoſtle applies to Jeſus thoſe words of the prophet, *they ſhall call his name, Emanuel, viz.* God with us; that therefore he held Jeſus to be God Almighty. For the phraſe, *they ſhall call his name, Emanuel,* God with us, implies only in the preſent caſe, that the perſon to whom it is applied, ſhould *(d)* deſerve to be ſo called on account of ſome extraordinary kindneſs of God manifeſted to the world by him. And that nothing

(d) See If. ix. 6. lxii. 4. Jerem. iii. 17. xxxiii. 16. Ezek. xlviii. 35. &c. where the ſame phraſe bears this ſignification.

nothing more was meant by it, is confirmed by this fact, that you never find that it was a name by which Jeſus went. *(e)*

The other paſſage is, Matth. xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore, and make diſciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy ghoſt.* The greater part of chriſtians on hearing or reading this form of baptiſm, inſtantly conclude, from its having been inſtilled into them from their very infancy, that it teaches three perſons to be each of them God; or, in the words of the creed aſcribed to Athanaſius, that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the holy ghoſt or ſpirit, God. But you will think it right, not to take an interpretation to be true without examination, that teaches there are three perſons, who are each of them God: and will hold it your duty to inquire for yourſelves, what Chriſt himſelf intended by this language; and alſo how his diſciple Matthew, who heard and who alone hath recorded theſe words, underſtood them.

Now you will find, that throughout his goſpel, this evangeliſt introduces our Saviour, conſtantly and invariably ſpeaking but of one perſon, as God; whom he calls, and frequently addreſſes in

(e) But ſee this text with great ability and more at large explained, in the 3d Number of Frend's Review of Mr. Coulthurſt's texts.

prayer, by the title of *father*, i. e. the author of his being and all its bleſſings: and whom he directs his followers to invoke, as their *father*, Matth. vi. 9. i. e. as equally the author of their beings. St. Matthew alſo lets you know, that there was nothing ſo peculiar in Chriſt ſtiling God his Father, as if it pointed to his having any nature different from ours; ſince Chriſt no leſs ſpeaks of God as being our *Father* in the following places, v. 18. 45. 48. vi. 6. 8. 9. 14. 15. 18. 32. vii. 11. x. 20. 29.

The appellation, *the Son*, which our Lord here gives himſelf, and which is often given him, i. e. the *Son of God*; in its primary ſenſe, indicates only that he had his origin from God, as all his rational creation, Luke iii. 38. It alſo ſignifies the being eſpecially dear to God, and favoured by him: in which ſenſe it is given to all chriſtians, (John iii. 1, 2.) his followers, as well as to himſelf. And in this ſenſe, it is ſometimes peculiar, and appropriated to the holy Jeſus, as being the Chriſt, the Meſſiah, the *Son of God*, by way of eminence: which are all ſynonymous phraſes, when applied to Jeſus; and mark only his high office, and dignity, beſtowed on him by Almighty God, and not any difference or diſtinction of nature, from that of other men.

As to the notion of a ſubtle metaphyſical generation of Chriſt, from God, before the world was made,

made, ſuppoſed to be conveyed by the term *Son*; which, learned men invented and pleaſed themſelves with, when they became aſhamed of having one for the author of their religion, who had ſuffered an ignominious death, and wanted to exalt him above the condition of a man: this was a thing quite foreign to the thoughts of this diſciple of Jeſus, Matthew, the toll-gatherer. The evangeliſts were not philoſophers, or metaphyſicians, any more than their divine maſter. And yet this is the myſtic, unintelligible ſenſe, in which the defenders of the divinity of Chriſt, modern as well as ancient, take refuge, when driven from all other reſources and arguments both of reaſon and ſcripture; *viz.* that he was the Son of God by an eternal generation *(g)*.

In reſpect of the *holy ghoſt* or *holy ſpirit*, into whoſe name alſo diſciples were to be baptized, the paſſages, where Matthew ſpeaks of it, are the following.

Matt. iii. 16. *He ſaw* the Spirit of God *deſcending upon him.*

Matt.

(g) "That Jeſus is the *Chriſt*, the *Meſſiah*, the *Son of God*, which are names ſynonymous, the ſcriptures teach, (ſaid a valuable writer,) and they confirm the truth by miracles and prophecy. But the *Son of God* is a title of dignity and office; and the phraſe is abuſed, when it is made to ſignify a Son begotten before all worlds, or a ſon exiſting from eternity, or indeed exiſting before his mother's conception.

Matt. iv. 1. *Then was Jeſus led up of* the Spirit *into the wilderneſs to be tempted of the devil.*

—— x. 20. *It is not ye that ſpeak, but* the Spirit of your Father *that ſpeaketh in you.*

—— xii. 18. *Behold my ſervant, whom I have choſen; I will put* my ſpirit *upon him.*

—— —— 28. *If I caſt out demons by* the Spirit of God.

—— —— 31. *All manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men; but the blaſphemy of* the ſpirit *ſhall not be forgiven.*

—— —— 32. *Whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of man, it ſhall be forgiven him; but whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the* holy ſpirit, *it ſhall not be forgiven him.*

—— xxii. 43. *How then doth David* in ſpirit *call him, Lord?*

You will find no other place, in which our evangeliſt mentions *the ſpirit, the ſpirit of God, the holy ſpirit*; and in all theſe it evidently ſignifies only the extraordinary power of God.

In the paſſage now under conſideration, the holy ſpirit, the extraordinary power and gift of the Almighty, by which the goſpel was at firſt

atteſted and propagated, is ſpoken of as a perſon, (*g*) into whoſe name they were to be baptized; a figure of ſpeech moſt frequent in the ſcriptures.

To be *baptized into the name* of any perſon, is to be enliſted under them; to ſubmit themſelves to their direction. So 1 Cor. x. 2. the Iſraelites are ſaid to have been baptized into Moſes: in which the apoſtle has reſpect to Exod. xiv. 31. where they are ſpoken of as *believing God and his ſervant Moſes*; i. e. they engaged themſelves to be directed by them.

Having thus explained the apoſtle's ſenſe of the ſeveral terms uſed: I aſk; CAN it be ſuppoſed, that a choſen diſciple of Chriſt, an apoſtle, and perſonal attendant upon him, who wrote with a deſign

(*g*) The apoſtle John characterizes the *Spirit*, or *Holy Spirit*, which Chriſt promiſed to his followers, as a Divine perſon, that ſhould be with them, plead for them, and direct them, xiv. 16. 17. 26. xvi. 7. 13. 14; when it was nothing but the gifts of a divine power, or wiſdom, which he ſpeaks of, and perſonifies; and which, according to our Lord's promiſe, were imparted to them after his reſurrection. In like manner, the *Holy Spirit* is ſpoken of as a Perſon, in this form of baptiſm. The ſame figure of ſpeech is frequently met with in the Acts and the Epiſtles. Acts xv. 28. *It ſeemeth good to the Holy Spirit and to us*, ſay the apoſtles; *i. e.* to us directed by a divine extraordinary impulſe and aſſiſtance, on the occaſion. This is explained and confirmed, ver. 8. where the ſame perſons, *i. e.* the apoſtles, ſay of the converted gentiles, *God gave them the holy ghoſt*, rather *the holy ſpirit, even as he did unto us*: plainly ſignifying it to be an extraordinary divine gift, or power, that was conferred.

ſign to give all neceſſary information relating to the goſpel, ſhould, at the very end of his book, bring in his maſter Jeſus, ſpeaking of two perſons, himſelf and the holy ſpirit, being each of them God, equal with the Father, acquainting them with a thing of ſuch magnitude abruptly, only at the moment of his leaving them, which he had never taken the leaſt notice of before: WHEN moreover throughout his preceding book, he had deſcribed the holy Jeſus, merely, as one of the human race, and alſo related his conſtantly ſpeaking of himſelf as ſuch only; and the ſpirit, or holy ſpirit, never mentioned by him in his hiſtory, or by Chriſt, as being any thing more than the extraordinary power of God? No: no: NEITHER Chriſt himſelf nor his evangeliſt, appear to have had any the moſt remote idea of the kind; and all that Matthew would underſtand to be intended by this form of baptiſm, would be, in accord with what Jeſus, his lord and maſter, had all along taught: *viz.* that his followers were, by the ceremony of baptiſm, to be initiated into the religion of the goſpel, which came, as from its ſource, from God, the benevolent Father of all; was delivered to them by Chriſt, his choſen ſervant, (xii. 18.) and beloved ſon, and was finally confirmed by the holy ſpirit, by the atteſtation and the gift of a divine power, to Chriſt, and to his apoſtles and immediate followers. WHOEVER therefore is diſpoſed

poſed to believe what is called a *trinity*, or any perſon to be God but the Father, muſt ſeek for it elſewhere; for the apoſtle Matthew appears certainly to have known nothing of the matter; nor does the bleſſed Jeſus himſelf, in any language cited as uſed in this evangeliſt's writings, ever arrogate any thing of *deity*, as belonging to him; but quite the contrary.

There is an admirable note of Dr. Watts's, on this paſſage of St. Matthew, which ſhews what a liberal, and judicious critic in the ſcriptures, he was capable of having been in all reſpects, if his judgment had not been overawed and cramped in early youth; and which alſo manifeſts, that at the time of writing it, he did not reckon upon this form of baptiſm in our evangeliſt, as any proof of the doctrine of a Trinity, to be relied on.

" If there be any particular doctrine, ſays he, or duty, which I find written but in one ſingle text of ſcripture, or expreſſed but darkly; I ſhould reaſonably conclude, that the Great God deſigned not that doctrine, or that duty, to be of very great importance in the chriſtian life. For a dark expreſſion is much more eaſily miſtaken, as to the true ſenſe of it; and a ſingle text is much more liable to be miſcopied; or dropped by a tranſcriber, or to be miſconſtrued by a tranſlator, or overſeen or neglected by a common reader or

hearer: and the Great God would not put matters of high importance on ſo doubtful and dangerous a foot, and leave things neceſſary at ſuch uncertainties; leſt honeſt and humble inquirers ſhould, after all their pains, miſtake their way to heaven." Dr. Watts's Works, vol. iii. p. 691, &c.

He then proceeds particularly to ſhew, that our Saviour's form and order of baptiſm, Matt. xxviii. 19. being but once expreſſed, and by one ſacred writer, is not an exception to this rule, nor was any great weight to be laid upon it; for theſe reaſons:

1. "Becauſe there is never an actual example, or inſtance of this compleat form of baptiſm, practiced, in any place of ſcripture.

2. "When the buſineſs of baptiſm is mentioned in ſeveral places in the Epiſtles, it is generally declared, that baptiſm was performed in the name of the Lord Jeſus. Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

"I think therefore, concludes he, the rule may ſtand good ſtill; that when a doctrine, or a duty is mentioned but in one place of ſcripture, it cannot be of abſolute neceſſity to ſalvation."— Dr. Watts then, would not have diſapproved, if he would not rather have commended, thoſe, who laid aſide the common baptiſmal form, and baptiſed only into the name of Jeſus.

COROL-

COROLLARY.

Thus is there nothing to be found in St. Matthew's goſpel, that implies his having had the leaſt thought, that his divine maſter Jeſus was any other than a human being, with extraordinary powers from God, to fill the great office intruſted with him, for promoting the virtue and final happineſs of mankind.

SECTION III.

The evidence of St. Mark concerning the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.

St. Mark, the author of the goſpel, that is put next in order, and that goes by his name, was an attendant upon and fellow-labourer with the apoſtles. His hiſtory of Chriſt is credibly reported to have been inſpected by the apoſtle Peter, and therefore may be preſumed to give alſo that apoſtle's ſentiments. It opens at the commencement of our Lord's public miniſtry, and appearance, in the character of the great prophet of God, the Chriſt, the Meſſiah; and cloſes with his unjuſt death upon the croſs, and being afterwards raiſed to life again in three days, by the divine power.

And throughout the whole of it, there is not any thing recorded of him, but what belongs to a human creature, endowed with communications of a divine wiſdom and ſupernatural power.

SECTION IV.

The evidence of St. Luke concerning the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.

St. Luke, was a companion of the apoſtle Paul in his travels to preach the goſpel; much beloved and eſteemed by him. He was a very early believer; if he was not alſo a diſciple of Chriſt himſelf, as ſome have conjectured, and one of thoſe to whom our Lord made himſelf known the very day of his reſurrection. It is probable, that he was acquainted with the other apoſtles, as well as St. Paul; and therefore may be reckoned to ſpeak their ſentiments equally with his own. And it is remarkable, that there is not one circumſtance to be met with in his goſpel memoirs that beſpeaks him to have held or believed the Lord Jeſus to have been any other than one of the jewiſh nation, a divine prophet or meſſenger, highly favoured above all other prophets, by greater divine communications, and a more important meſſage.

Corollaries

COROLLARIES *deducible from the joint teſtimonies of the three former evangeliſts, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

1. The concurring ſentiments of theſe three former evangeliſts, that Chriſt was a human being, and not God, or of a condition ſuperior to man, are of great weight. Aſſuredly they knew nothing of their maſter Jeſus being God, or a great preexiſtent ſpirit, or they would have told us. They would have been wanting in their duty, if they had not mentioned a circumſtance of ſuch magnitude, as they undertook to give their fellow-chriſtians, and to leave behind them, an account of ſo important a character, for the benefit of poſterity. And we may be the more aſſured, they would not have omitted a thing of this moment; as they never intimate that there would be any other hiſtorian to come after them, who would ſupply their deficiencies. They appear then to have gone out of the world themſelves, believing Chriſt to have been one of the human ſpecies, and not belonging to any higher claſs of beings, and deſirous that others ſhould ſo think of him. And we muſt therefore from their teſtimony neceſſarily conclude that he was ſuch.

2. This affords the ſtrongeſt preſumption, that their fellow-evangeliſt St. John was entirely of the ſame ſentiment with them; eſpecially as this laſt

never tells us, that he was honoured with any peculiar revelations concerning the perſon of Chriſt, which were not imparted to the other apoſtles.

But though St. John himſelf never ſays, that he was commiſſioned to deliver any thing of a higher nature concerning his maſter Jeſus, than his fellow-apoſtles, others have ſuppoſed it for him, and aſcerted, that it was his peculiar province to treat of his divinity and preexiſtence. And this fancy having been thrown out by ſome of the fathers, has been long the popular belief; and is to be found in moſt commentators *(b)*. Our buſineſs will be now to ſhew, that there is no ground to believe that John differed, in theſe matters, from the other evangeliſts, or reckoned his divine maſter to be any other than a human being.

The ſentiments of this evangeliſt have been before conſidered, in another place. But it is neceſſary to take them in here, to compleat my argument.

(b) Hardy ſays, without heſitation, in his preface to his New Teſtament; "John peruſed and approved the goſpels of the three former evangeliſts, and ſupplied what they had omitted, &c. and as they treated of Chriſt's humanity, he, at the deſire of the biſhops of Aſia, wrote concerning his deity." This Jerom had ſaid before him, who wanted to ſupport the popular doctrine of the times by John's teſtimony. But Jerom comes too late to know any thing of the evangeliſt's real deſign in writing, which can beſt and only be known from his own words.

ment. And ſome things, I hope, may be placed in a ſtronger and juſter point of view than before. I ſhall therefore review thoſe paſſages in this evangeliſt which are particularly relied on for aſſerting Chriſt to be God, or a great preexiſtent ſpirit: and as the greater part of chriſtians look upon the preface of St. John's goſpel, as quite deciſive on this point with reſpect to his divinity, I ſhall begin with a minute inquiry into it.

SECTION V.

The evidence of St. John concerning the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.

Of the introduction to St. John's goſpel.

It is generally agreed, that St. John compoſed his hiſtory of Chriſt the laſt of all the evangeliſts; and it is very probable, that it was drawn up, and publiſhed, a little before, or at the breaking out of the jewiſh war, A. D. 68; when the goſpel had been for ſome years preached to jews and gentiles, but was ſtill rejected by many, and frowned upon by the ruling powers. Of this, as will be ſeen, there is ſome intimation given in his preface.

Our apoſtle tells us, that his deſign in writing was to furniſh a ſufficient number of authentic miracles,

racles, out of many more wrought by Jeſus, ſuch as might prove him to be the Chriſt, their promiſed great prophet, who was to teach mankind the way to eternal life.—xx. 30 31. *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus in the preſence of his diſciples, which are not written in this book. But theſe are written (i), that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

And

(*i*) Some of the early chriſtian fathers, who took up their opinions from their philoſophy, and not from conſulting the ſcriptures, imagining Chriſt to be the logos, the *Word*, mentioned by St. John in the beginning of his goſpel, were thence carried away with a notion, as was juſt now intimated, that our evangeliſt's principal deſign in his additional hiſtory of Chriſt after that of the other three evangeliſts, was to treat of Chriſt's divinity, which had been leſs attended to by the others. And this opinion has been all along, and is ſtill embraced by many. But a writer's own declaration concerning his intention is certainly to be taken before the fancies and conjectures of others. And the apoſtle here expreſsly ſays, that he had drawn up his account to prove that Jeſus was not God; but the Chriſt, the Son of God: by which could only be underſtood, that Jeſus was the great promiſed prophet and teacher of the will of God, who was, and was foretold to be, of a particular tribe and family among the jews, and was therefore of courſe a human creature, and not belonging to any higher claſs of beings. It is to be hoped, that no one will henceforth take upon him to contradict this apoſtle, and ſay that his deſign in his goſpel was to treat of Chriſt's divinity, when he himſelf aſſerts the direct contrary.

And this, which in plain language he thus ſpecifies near the cloſe of his book, is the very ſame thing, I would remark, with which he ſets out in the beginning of it; only there varying the phraſe, and adopting the lofty prophetic ſtile, as more ſuited to the grand ideas of his ſubject with which he was impreſſed, and which he was deſirous to enforce, in the entrance of his work, upon the minds of his readers.

John i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The term λογος, logos, which we render *Word*, might with equal juſtneſs, be tranſlated, *reaſon*, *wiſdom*. And this latter rendering of it is more ſuited to the apoſtle's intention. For it is the concurring ſentiment of commentators, antient and modern, that St. John had in his eye, and took his idea and phraſe from what is ſpoken of wiſdom, in Prov. viii. " For my part,' ſays Dr. Campbell, one of the laſt of them, ſumming up what had been obſerved upon the ſubject by very many others before him; ' I intirely agree with ' thoſe, who think it moſt likely, that the allu- ' ſion here is to a portion of holy writ, *viz.* to ' Prov. viii. throughout. What is here termed, ' ο λογος, *the Word*, is there σοφια, *wiſdom*.' Note on John i. 1.

" You

" You deſire to know from me, ſays Vitrigga *(k)*, a learned german divine, of deſerved reputation, what is the true meaning of the term, logos, in the preface of St. John's goſpel, as there are ſuch various opinions of learned men concerning it? I do not take upon me to decide for others, but ſhall with all modeſty deliver my own ſentiment, without offence, I hope, as it is without cenſure of my friends, who may think differently from me. It is my opinion, that this term, logos, ſhould be rendered, *reaſon*, or *the wiſdom of God:* though I would have the phraſe, the *word of God*, retained in the common verſion. Every one muſt ſee, in reading this prologue of St. John's goſpel, that he alludes throughout to the viiith chap. of the Proverbs of Solomon: ſo that we ought to make choice of ſuch a tranſlation of

(*k*) Quæris veram hujus nominis interpretationem, de qua variæ extant eruditorum hominum ſententiæ. Non vindico mihi ejus rei arbitrium; tantum, qiod hic ſentio, modeſte, ſalva diſſentientium exiſtimatione et amicitia, profero; vertendum eſſe hoc nomen, *Ratio* vel *Sapientia Dei:* etſi receptam phraſim *Sermonis Dei*, in verſione retinendam cenſuerim. Conſtat cuique, prologum evangelii legenti, alludere Joannem in toto illo prologo, ad caput octavum proverbiorum Solomonis; ut proinde talem eligere oporteat interpretationem, quæ affinis ſit voci *Sapientiæ*. Vitringa in Apoc. cap. xix. ver. 13. p. 1109. This is the quotation in Lardner's Supplement, Vol. I. p. 437; of which I have given a tranſlation.

of the term, logos, as comes neareſt to the word, *wiſdom.*"

The paſſage of Solomon, to which the apoſtle makes alluſion, is; *Doth not Wiſdom cry? and underſtanding put forth her voice! She ſtandeth in the top of high places, by the way, in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men. The* LORD *poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth: when he eſtabliſhed the clouds above: when he ſtrengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the ſea his decree, that the water ſhould not paſs his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.*

By *Wiſdom*, in theſe words of Solomon, no jew, no reader of competent underſtanding, unleſs he had imbibed ſuch an opinion beforehand, would conclude that a divine perſon, an intelligent agent, another God, different from the ſupreme Being, was intended: but would eaſily perceive, that Solomon choſe this method of repreſenting the divine attribute

attribute (*l*) of wiſdom, as a queen, or a perſon of the higheſt dignity, that had been always with God, from the begining, and preſent at the creation of the world, and afterwards as taking pleaſure in attending to the concerns of mortals: to teach in that magnificent, animated ſtile, peculiar to the ſacred writings; that all things were originally made and are conducted by the moſt perfect wiſdom of the Divine Being; and the affairs of men in particular governed by a moſt wiſe and kind providence.

Now in imitation of Solomon, and with acknowleged reference to him, St John, in his preface, introduces and deſcribes *divine wiſdom*, as a great perſonage, who had been from the firſt with God, nay, who was God; by whom all things had been made at firſt, and different advantages of light and knowlege afterwards communicated to the world, and eſpecially to the Iſraelites; but who had

(*l*) It is a frequent mode of ſpeaking of, and addreſſing the Divine Being, and ſource of all perfection, to denominate him by ſome one of his attributes:—

'Aſſiſt us, *O thou power divine*, with the light of that reaſon 'by which thou lighteſt the world, by which grace and beau-'ty is diffuſed through every part, and the welfare of the 'whole is ever uniformly upheld!'

Harris's Three Treatiſes, p. 229.

Eternal WISDOM, thee we praiſe,
Thee the creation ſings:
With thy loud name, rocks, hills, and ſeas,
And heav'n's high palace rings.

Watts's Song to creating Wiſdom.

had now beſtowed on all other nations, equally with jews, the means of attaining eternal life: The apoſtle thus perſonifying the divine wiſdom, that he might have an opportunity thereby to declare the fulneſs of it which dwelt in Jeſus; or, in plainer words, as mentioned above, that Jeſus was the Chriſt, the Meſſiah.

This, which will be farther illuſtrated, and proved to be the deſign of the evangeliſt, was ſoon obſcured and loſt among the learned chriſtians, by the comments of falſe philoſophy, and from their not being ſatisfied with the plain doctrine of the ſcripture concerning Chriſt: and through them, the whole chriſtian world has been blinded with reſpect to his true character for 1600 years. But the genuine intention and meaning of the apoſtle would have ſtood a fairer chance for being recovered, in later times, by chriſtians, eſpecially ſince the Reformation, that the ſcriptures have been allowed to be tranſlated into the mother-tongue of different countries, if the tranſlators had kept more exactly to the original.

It would not have been taken, for inſtance, ſo immediately, and ſo as to exclude all farther inquiry and deciſion, that the term, logos, *word*, ſtood for Chriſt, and that Chriſt was God; if it had not been wrongly tranſlated, as in our common verſion, ver. 2. *All things were made by* him, *and without* him *was not any thing made that was made. In* him *was life*, &c; but the words had

had been rendered, *All things were made by* it, *and without* it *was not any thing made that was made, In* it *was life*, &c: Some of our engliſh verſions. that by Judd, in 1552, and that by Tomſon in 1583, have attended to this conſtruction in part, though they have not carried it throughout, as it ought to have been done.

Caſtellio or Chateillon, whom I named with honour in my former addreſs to you, has ſtrictly adhered to the apoſtle's language, in this paſſage, in his French tranſlation of the bible, which I put below *(m)*. And I queſtion not his intending the ſame

(m) L'evangile ſelon St. Jehan. chap. i. Au commencement étoit la parolle, e la parolle étoit au commencement vers Dieu, e étoit la parolle Dieu, laquelle étoit au commencement vers Dieu. Tout a été fait par elle, e ſans elle rien n' a été fait, qui ait étè fait. En elle étoit vie, e la vie etoit la lumiere des hommes, e la lumiere luit es tenebres, e les tenebres ne l'ont pas comprinſe. Il y eut un homme envoyé de Dieu, qui avoit nom Jehan, lequel vint pour têmognage pour têmogner de la lumiere. Il y avoit la vraye lumiere, qui illumine tout homme venant au monde. La ditte parolle etoit au monde, e le monde avoit été fait par elle, e le monde ne l'a pas conneue. Elle êt venue chés ſoi, e les ſiens ne l'ont pas receue. E tous ceux qui l'ont receue, elle leur a donné puiſſance d'etre fait enfans de Dieu, aux croyans en ſon nom, lequels ne ſont pas engendrés de ſang, ne de volunté de chair, ne de volunté d' homme, mais de Dieu. E la parolle a été faitte chair, e a habité entre nous, pleine de grace e verité: e avons veu ſa clarté, comme clarté du fils unique du pere.

Le Bible nouvellement tranſlatée, par Sebaſtian Chateillon. A Bale. MDLV.

ſame in his latin verſion, but the term, *ſermo*, being there of the maſculine gender, it is not ſo diſtinct and diſcernible.

The excellent Le Clerc, that accompliſhed ſcholar, firſt adventured to publiſh in latin, what I would call a juſt tranſlation of this beginning of St. John's goſpel. Only, inſtead of *ſapientia*, *wiſdom*, which I propoſe, he renders the term λογος, *ratio*, *reaſon*. But he very properly remarks, that λογος, *reaſon*, is the ſame with σοφια, *wiſdom*, and that they are often put for each other.

It is more agreeable to our language, as well as more ſcriptural, to render the term, logos, *wiſdom*, rather than *reaſon*, and therefore I ſhall adopt it in the tranſlation, which I am going to lay before you. And I truſt, that you will thus find an eaſy ſenſe of the whole paſſage, and in perfect agreement with the ſtile of the ſacred writings, when conſidered in the light above repreſented, as a perſonification of Divine Wiſdom, or a characterizing of the Divine Being by one of his attributes; and that you will thereby be guarded againſt that polytheiſm, which chriſtians, full of heathen ideas, very early grafted upon it.

A new tranſlation, and paraphraſe, of the Preface (n) to St. John's goſpel, with remarks.

John i. 1. 2. 3. *In the beginning was Wiſdom, and Wiſdom was with God, and (o) God was Wiſdom.*

The

(n) Dr. Campbell, in his late tranſlation of The four Goſpels, intitles this Preface of St. John's goſpel, THE INCARNATION. I am ſorry that ſo learned a man ſhould continue to give countenance to ſuch groſs, unſcriptural language, which caſts a miſt over the meaning of the apoſtle. For it is apparent, and the Doctor himſelf owns it, in a note on ver. 14. that σαρξ, fleſh, in this place, ſtands for *a human being*, man as mortal: the whole man, conſiſting of body and ſoul as we ſpeak, and not merely the fleſh, the body, the outward caſe. The word, *Incarnation*, therefore, which is in plain engliſh, *the putting into fleſh*, is moſt improper, as it is intirely without any juſt meaning.

This reſpectable writer falls into the ſame miſtake, in rendering ver. 14. thus; And the word became *incarnate*. If he had adhered to his own juſt interpretation of the term, σαρξ, fleſh, he ſhould have tranſlated it, *And the word became a human being*, a mortal man; which is the proper rendering. *Incarnation* and *Incarnate*, are terms that ſhould be avoided, by all who wiſh to give the true ſenſe of the ſacred writer, and to ſpeak ſo as to be underſtood.

(o) "The old engliſh tranſlation, authorized by Henry viii, following the arrangement uſed in the original, ſays, *God was the word*. In this manner, Luther alſo, in his german tranſlation, renders it, Gort was das wort." Campbell on John i. 1.

The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by it, and without it was nothing made.

Paraphraſe. Wiſdom was before all things; for wiſdom was always with God, yea Wiſdom was God himſelf. It was with him before the creation of the world, for every thing was brought into exiſtence by the moſt perfect wiſdom, and there are evident marks of it in every thing that was made.

Remark 1. The ſacred writer explains himſelf, leſt any ſhould miſtake him, that by Wiſdom he intended God himſelf, whoſe attribute it was; and not, another God.

Rem. 2. The conſtruction here given is not a mere tautology, as ſome have repreſented it, as if it amounted to nothing more than ſaying, in a circuitous manner, that God was a very wiſe being. For it is always of importance for grave reſpectable writers, particularly acquainted with the ways of God, to aſſert that they are all the reſult of wiſdom. But there was a peculiar propriety, and beauty, in the apoſtle introducing Wiſdom, (the wiſdom of God) as a Divine Perſon, creating and governing all things; that he might in a more forcible way inform his readers of what they could not of themſelves know, and of what he could bear teſtimony, that this wiſdom was in the higheſt degree imparted to Jeſus Chriſt.

Rem. 3. It ſtill diſcovers more the judgment of St. John, in making ſuch a proem to his hiſtory of

Chriſt, and in ſo ſtrongly inſiſting on the ſole creative power of God, by his wiſdom, *i. e.* by himſelf alone; if it be true, as has been the ſentiment of many judicious perſons, that he had reſpect to a groſs, wide-ſpreading, and plauſible error; which in very early times took place among learned chriſtians; *viz.* that the world was ſo imperfect, and abounding with evil, that it was not the work of the ſupreme being, whom they believed to be perfectly good; but of a power inferior to him. For this the reader may conſult what Dr. Lardner cites from Beauſobre, in his hiſtory of Heretics, page 78; and ſtill more, many paſſages in Dr. Prieſtley's admirable work, the hiſtory of early opinions concerning Chriſt, and in his Letters to Dr. Horſley.

Rem. 4. If we were not poſſeſſed of ſuch ſatisfactory proof, that our evangeliſt here treats, not of Chriſt, but of the logos, the Word, the Wiſdom of God, which is himſelf; there would nevertheleſs be a preſumption, and objection, againſt the common interpretation, and his intending here to deſcribe Jeſus, as God equal to the ſupreme, that could never be ſurmounted. For it is out of the line of all probability, that the apoſtle John, a jew, a man of piety and of a ſound mind, who held Jehovah, their God, to be God alone, and no other beſides HIM; that he, ſhould begin his hiſtory of his maſter Jeſus, the Chriſt, *i. e.* their expected

expected great prophet, one deſcended from a particular tribe and family of their nation, with declaring *him* to be GOD. Moreover, ſuch a declaration would have been a direct breach of the law of God, given by Moſes; and by that law, Deut. xiii. 10. the apoſtle would have been liable to have been ſtoned to death, for delivering and preaching ſuch a doctrine. Our Lord's adverſaries indeed, in their rage, John x. 13. accuſed him of forming ſuch pretenſions; becauſe ver. 30. he had ſaid, *I and the Father are one*; though it was only in a ſenſe ſimilar to that, in which he afterwards ſaid, John xvii. 21. 22. that his diſciples *were one with him* and *with the Father*. But he, with great humility, inſtantly diſclaimed every thing of the kind, ver. 34. 35. 36. alleging, that he took nothing more upon him than belonged to his character and authority from God, as the Meſſiah: owning however, at the ſame time, that it would have been blaſphemy in him, if he had pretended to be the ſupreme God.

Ver. 4. 5. *In it was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not.*

Paraphraſe. With the Divine Wiſdom heretofore was lodged that great and peculiar bleſſing and privilege of the goſpel, the knowlege of the way to eternal life; and this knowlege was, and was intended to be a ſufficient light to guide men

to it. But although this light has for ſome time ſhone forth upon the earth, many chuſe rather to walk in the darkneſs of ignorance, than to make the proper uſe of it.

Remark. The ſacred writer refers to the reception which the goſpel had hitherto met with in the world, particularly among his countrymen; in figurative expreſſions, of eaſy comprehenſion, and familiar to the jews. Chriſt often calls himſelf the light; eſpecially that which was to conduct mankind to eternal life. John viii. 12. xi. 25. xii. 46.

Having noted this in general, he proceeds to ſpecify more particularly, by whoſe immediate inſtrumentality, Divine Wiſdom made the firſt opening, and diſcovery of this light of eternal life to the world.

Ver. 6. 7. 8. 9. *There was a man ſent from God, whoſe name was John. The ſame came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was ſent to bear witneſs of that light. That was the true light which came into the world, and enlighteneth every man.*

Paraphraſe. John, the ſon of Zachariah, had a divine commiſſion, to teſtify and declare, that God was about to make the laſt and moſt perfect revelation of his will to the world. But though an extraordinary prophet, he was not the perſon by

by whom this revelation was to be made; his office being only to perſuade men, by immediate repentance and a ſincere reformation, to fit themſelves to receive it. That perſon had a much higher office and dignity than John, in that he was honoured with being made the inſtrument of bringing, not jews only, but all mankind to eternal life.

The evangeliſt, having thus in a brief digreſſion, touched upon the diſtinct provinces of Chriſt and of John the Baptiſt, his fore-runner; proceeds with the ſubject he was upon, which was the reception the goſpel had met with in the world.

Ver. 10. 11. 12. 13. *It* (Divine Wiſdom) *was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came to it's own land, and it's own people received it not. But as many as received it, to them it gave power, to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on it's name. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Paraphraſe. Divine Wiſdom was for a while among men, *i.e.* in the perſon of Chriſt; as he ſoon after explains himſelf: But though it had given them their being, their prejudices and evil paſſions made them pay no regard to it. Even the people of the jews, who had been diſtinguiſhed by it with ſuch ſignal favours, and now had the bleſſing of the goſpel firſt communicated to them,

did not attend to it as became them. Nevertheleſs, on thoſe who did liſten to it's inſtructions, of whatever nation, country, or family, jews or gentiles, it beſtowed the privilege of becoming the children of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Rem. 1. The evangeliſt here plainly intimates, that the goſpel had been now, for ſome time, preached to jews, and gentiles, and received by ſome among both; by the latter eſpecially, in greater numbers.

Rem. 2. When Wiſdom, or God, whoſe attribute it is, is ſaid to be in the world, and to come to men, the jews never took this language in the groſs literal ſenſe, as if God in perſon had come to them. But they readily underſtood it(*p*), as ſignifying, that the Divine Being had vouchſafed to manifeſt his will and deſigns to them, by ſome prophet raiſed up by him; or had afforded them aſſiſtance and protection by ſome extraordinary interpoſition in their behalf.

Rem. 3. It is from a groſs conception, and miſtake of the kind juſt now noted, that ſome chriſtians in our own days, crudely maintain, that there

(*p*) Iſaiah xlv. 2. *Jehovah, God,* ſays, that *he will go before Cyrus, make the mountains level before him,* &c.—Not God in perſon: but it is a prophetic deſcription of the Divine Providence that would attend that prince, and proſper his expedition againſt Babylon.

there is no God but Jeſus, meaning the divinity in him: not conſidering, that Jeſus's divinity conſiſted only in the communication of divine powers to him; and that if it pleaſed the Almighty, others might in that ſenſe be equally gods as Jeſus was, *i.e.* by a communication of the ſame divine powers.

The evangeliſt now approaches to the point he had in view from the firſt; and on account of which he had been induced to adopt the lofty figurative manner of Solomon, in his deſcription of the Divine Being; namely, to declare thereby the fulneſs of the divine wiſdom, which was communicated to Jeſus; in other words, that he was the Chriſt, the anointed of God.

Ver. 14. *And Wiſdom became man, and dwelt among us, and we beheld it's glory, the glory as of the well-beloved of the Father, full of grace and truth (q).*

Paraphraſe

(*q*) If that early corruption of the true doctrine concerning Chriſt, had appeared, when John wrote his goſpel, which he particularly writes againſt in his firſt and ſecond epiſtles, *viz.* That our Saviour was not *fleſh*, not really a mortal ſuffering man, but one in appearance only; our evangeliſt might have a view to this here, in his preface to his goſpel, to condemn it, where he ſays; *Wiſdom became fleſh*, became a human being, *i.e.* the Divine Wiſdom dwelled in the man Chriſt Jeſus; was in a high degree communicated to him. This will be exactly ſimilar to what he aſſerts in his epiſtles, that Jeſus Chriſt *came in fleſh*; i. e. that he was a human being, a mortal man, divinely inſpired and commiſſioned.

Paraphraſe. That *Wiſdom*, concludes the apoſtle, which I have ſpoken of, and have aſſerted to have been with God from the beginning, yea to have been God himſelf, became conſpicuous in the man Chriſt Jeſus, and in him ſojourned for a time among us, mild and gracious; and we, his apoſtles, beheld in him the evident tokens of this wiſdom, in that knowlege of the divine will and deſigns which appeared in him, and in thoſe miraculous powers with which he was inveſted, and which beſpoke him the highly favoured and well-beloved Son of God.

COROLLARIES, *and* ILLUSTRATIONS *of the foregoing interpretation of* John i. 1.—14.

I.

Dr. Doddridge, in his Harmony, places before Chriſt's birth, this preface of St. John's goſpel; which he, without ſcruple, pronounces to be 'a very ſublime and emphatical account of the 'deity and incarnation of Chriſt;' and by this poſitive aſſertion without proof, greatly miſleads his numerous readers, who truſt him. For you have ſeen it proved, I hope, by ſatisfactory evidence, to be only a deſcription of the Divine Being himſelf, by his character or attribute of wiſdom, after the manner of Solomon, *Proverbs* viii. which the apoſtle made choice of, in opening his hiſtory, the more

more eaſily and naturally to teach, that the Divine Wiſdom dwelt in or was moſt abundantly communicated to the holy Jeſus.

The judicious Le Clerc, on the other hand, in his Harmony of the goſpels, with great propriety, introduces this preface, at Chriſt's entry on his public miniſtry, when the ſpirit deſcended (Matt. iii, 16. Mark i. 10. Luke iii. 32.) upon him; or when the Divine Wiſdom here ſpoken of, entered into or was imparted to him, and the gifts of a divine wiſdom and power were conferred upon him to qualify him for the important part he was to act, and enable him to give proof of his miſſion from God.

II.

It gives additional force and ſanction to the interpretation above aſſigned, that the λογος, the *Word*, is by no means a name of Chriſt, denoting him a great preexiſtent ſpirit, and ſubordinate creator of all things; becauſe the evangeliſt throughout his goſpel never after gives him that name, nor ſpeaks of him as ſuch a great being, or as exerting any powers more than belonged to ordinary men. Had he been ſuch a mighty preexiſtent Being, the Eternal himſelf, or next to the Eternal, he could not be ſuppoſed to be without powers of his own: whereas our apoſtle repreſents the holy Jeſus uniformly aſcribing to God, whatever extraordinary wiſdom was in him, as alſo the works,

or

or miracles that were wrought by him. He had no ſupernatural power, no divinity of his own, if we may ſo ſpeak; but only that of the Father dwelling in him, and aſſiſting his feeble human power.

III.

It having been maintained by ſome, in ſupport of their notion, that the logos, the *Word*, ſtands for Chriſt; that though the apoſtle John never after gives Chriſt that name in his goſpel, he aſcribes it to him in his other writings; I ſhall propoſe to your conſideration the two principal paſſages that are brought in proof of this opinion. And the firſt of theſe is 1 John i. 1. 2. 3.

The beginning of this firſt epiſtle of St. John is obſcure, as the writer breaks abruptly into his ſubject, which he was very earneſt about, without ſtating what it was. But as he had no thought of writing for us, at this diſtance of time, but directed himſelf to perſons of his acquaintance, and to whoſe circumſtances what he ſays was particularly adapted, they would readily comprehend what he meant, from the ſlighteſt hint. It appears however, in reading over his epiſtle, that great errors had crept in among thoſe to whom he addreſſed it; and particularly that ſome among them, through a miſtaken zeal, and deſign to do honour to our Saviour, denied that he had been a mortal

mortal man, liable to ſuffering like the reſt of us(*r*). Theſe Chriſtians our apoſtle cenſures very ſharply, iv. 1. 2. 3. *Beloved, believe not every ſpirit, but try the ſpirits whether they are of God: becauſe many falſe teachers,* pretending to have a divine authority, *are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the ſpirit of God. Every ſpirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in fleſh, is of God. And every ſpirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in fleſh, is not of God: and this is that ſpirit of antichriſt, whereof ye have heard that it ſhould come into the world, and even now already is in the world.* He repeats the ſame in his ſecond epiſtle, i. 7. *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in fleſh. This is a deceiver, and an antichriſt.* Our apoſtle, here declares, that every one who takes upon him to teach the doctrine of the ſpirit of God, *i. e.* the true chriſtian doctrine, and does not hold and teach the bleſſed Jeſus to have been a mortal man, is in a grievous error, is deceived himſelf, and deceives

(*r*) "It is well known, that in the early days of chriſtianity, particularly in Aſia, where St. John reſided, there aroſe people, generally called, Docetes, who denied the real humanity of Chriſt, and ſaid he was man in appearance only. Theſe St. John oppoſeth in his epiſtles, if not in his goſpel alſo. Againſt them he here aſſerts, that Jeſus had the innocent infirmities of the human nature, and that he really ſuffered and died." Lardner on the Logos, p. 8.

deceives others. And you cannot but perceive, that it is the very ſame doctrine, of the proper humanity of Chriſt, which he inſiſts upon and aſſerts with ſo much warmth in the beginning of his epiſtle.

There having then riſen up among thoſe, to whom our apoſtle writes, certain perſons who denied Jeſus Chriſt to have been really a man, and to have ſuffered and died; he begins his letter to them, by aſſerting, with vehemence, and an authority that became him, the contrary of ſuch a vain doctrine, from his own experience, as well as of others of the apoſtles, who had lived and converſed with Chriſt;

(*s*) *We publiſh unto you,* ſays he, *concerning the word* (*t*) *of life* (*u*), HIM, *who was from the beginning*;

(*s*) See Beauſobre and L'Enfant's verſion. This order in the rendering of the words is every natural and juſt.

(*t*) *The word of life*] i. e. the doctrine of eternal life, the goſpel. Not the *Word*, abſolutely, as a name of Chriſt; but the word of life: It may alſo, by a figure of ſpeech, moſt common with our Lord and the writers of the New Teſtament, ſignify Chriſt himſelf as being the author of the goſpel, of eternal life. In which acceptation, the words would be thus rendered,—We publiſh unto you, concerning the author of the goſpel, or of the doctrine of eternal life, him, whom we were acquainted with from the firſt preaching of it, &c. Dr. Doddridge's paraphraſe of *from the beginning*, is, from the beginning of the goſpel declaration.

(*u*) HIM] You will judge how far this is a juſt tranſlation, from theſe two conſiderations: 1. That it is not a thing, but

ning (w); whom we have heard; whom we have ſeen with our eyes; whom we have looked upon, and our hands have handled: For the life was manifeſted, and we have (x) ſeen it, and bear witneſs, and

but a perſon; that the ſacred writer is ſpeaking of; whom he deſcribes as the object of his ſenſes, and a human being with whom he had lived and converſed. 2. It is uſual with Chriſt, and the writers of the New Teſtament, frequently to ſpeak of things as perſons. Matth. xviii. 2. *The ſon of man came to ſave,* το απολωλος, that which was loſt; rather, *thoſe who were loſt.* John vi. 37. *Every thing that the Father hath given me, will come unto me.* ver. 39. *This is the will of the Father, that of every thing he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but I will raiſe it up at the laſt day. Thing* here for *perſon.* See Dr. Hammond on Coloſſians, i. 20. and a moſt valuable ſmall Tract, in Commentaries and Eſſays printed by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the Scriptures, intitled, "On the creation of all things by Jeſus Chriſt."

(w) *From the beginning*] απ' αρχης, *i. e.* from the beginning of the goſpel; of Chriſt's public miniſtry; when he began to be perſonally known to his diſciples. This phraſe, απ' αρχης, is again uſed by our apoſtle, a little lower, ii. 7. where it evidently ſignifies the firſt preaching of the goſpel. See alſo, ver. 13. 14. 24. iii. 11. 2 John, 5. See alſo particularly John xv. 27. where it is preciſely ſo uſed by our Lord himſelf. This is that which St. Mark ſtiles, i. 1. Αρχη του ευαγγελιου, &c. *the beginning of the goſpel.* It is a different phraſe that our apoſtle uſes in the entrance of his goſpel, εν αρχη ην ο λογος, &c. IN *the beginning,* &c. The ſame which is uſed, Geneſis, i. 1. εν αρχη κτλ.

(x) *We have ſeen it*] *i. e.* Chriſt, the author of it.

and ſhew unto you that eternal life, (y) which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us. HIM, *whom we have ſeen and heard, publiſh we unto you*, 1 John i. 1. 2. 3.

2. The other paſſage where St. John is ſuppoſed to ſpeak of the λογος, or *Word*, as a name by which Chriſt went, is, Rev. xix. 13. where in an emblematic deſcription of Chriſt, it is ſaid, *he was clothed with a veſture dipt in blood: and his name is called the Word of God.*

But the phraſe, *his name is called*; as above ſhewn, p. 12. ſignifies no more than, he ſhall deſerve to be called, it will be a name ſuited to his character. And unleſs St John intended to give him this appellation in theſe two paſſages now conſidered, the contrary of which I hope I may ſay, has been proved, it is certain, that none of the other apoſtles, or evangeliſts, ever ſo ſtile him. Which could ſcarcely have happened, if it was a name familiarly aſcribed to him. Not to ſay, that *the Word of God* is very different from *The Word*, and is not properly a name, but a paraphraſtic deſcription of the perſon to whom it is applied, as the revealer, the publiſher of the will and commands of God.

Not only thoſe chriſtians who have held Chriſt to be God equal with the Father, have ſuppoſed him

(y) *Which was with the Father*] The knowlege of eternal life was unknown, hidden in the divine councils, till Chriſt was commiſſioned to reveal it.

him to be the logos, the *Word*, ſpoken of in this preface to St. John's goſpel: but that famous, and excellent perſon, *F. Socinus*, giving quite a new turn to this paſſage, even he maintained Chriſt to be the logos, the *Word*, though he looked upon him in no higher a light than as the ſon of Mary, and one of the human race, with extraordinary endowments of wiſdom and power from heaven. The title of God, he reckoned to be given to him, in an inferior, figurative ſenſe, as Moſes, Exod. vii. 1. is ſaid to be *a God unto Pharaoh*. And what is ſpoken of *all things being made by him*, he interpreted, not concerning the firſt creation out of nothing, but of a *new creation*, and reformation of the world by the doctrine of the goſpel. Socin. op. vol. i. p. 79. Toulmin's Life of Chriſt, p. 368.

If ſuch an interpretation ſhould be found to be more conſiſtent, and in greater agreement with the ſacred writings, than that which has been now aſſigned, it would deſerve to be admitted. But to name no other, there is one objection of vaſt weight, which lies againſt it, and I know not how it can ever be removed; namely, that it is out of all probability, that the apoſtle John, who confeſſedly held his maſter to be a human creature, that he ſhould preface his hiſtory of him with declaring him to be God, without reſerve, in a moſt ſolemn manner. And although it may be

alleged, that he is ſo ſtiled in an inferior ſenſe proper ſenſe; yet this does not appear. It is beſides moſt improbable, that he ſhould here call Chriſt, God, when he never after gives him that title throughout his book, or deſcribes it as aſſumed by our lord; nor is it ever aſcribed to him by any other of the ſacred writers. Men that had been originally heathens might make ſo free, and be ſo familiar with the name of God, as we find done by the interpolater of Ignatius's Epiſtles; but not St. John, a jew-born.

V.

The apoſtle John, in this preface to his goſpel, teaches not, that Jeſus was the moſt high God, or a great preexiſtent ſpirit, and ſubordinate creator of the world; or that he was God in any ſenſe whatſoever: but that he was a mortal man, raiſed up for the greateſt purpoſes, and filled with wiſdom and divine power, to fit him for the execution of the important office and truſt delegated to him. And what the apoſtle here ſays, that *Wiſdom*, the Divine Wiſdom *became fleſh*, or rather a mortal man, in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, is in reality nothing more than the apoſtle afterwards intimates, as ſpoken in other words, by our lord himſelf. John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* xii. 45. 49. 50. *He that ſeeth me, ſeeth him that ſent me. I have not ſpoken of myſelf; but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a commandment, what*

what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak. And I know that his commandment is life everlaſting. Whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak. xiv. 10. 11. *Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of myſelf: but the Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works. Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or elſe believe me for the very work's ſake.* John the Baptiſt ſaith, John iii. 34. *For he whom God hath ſent, ſpeaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the ſpirit by meaſure unto him.* What is all this, but ſaying, that the Divine Wiſdom was imparted to Jeſus, and dwelt in him? Of the ſame ſignification is that language of St. Paul in his epiſtles, 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf.* Coloſſ. i. 19. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell,* ii. 9. *For in him dwelleth all (z) the fulneſs of the deity bodily.*

Somewhat of a like kind, but in a lower degree is predicated of the followers of Chriſt, in that firſt age of our religion. Eph. iii. 19. *That ye might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* 2 Cor. vi. 16. *Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them and walk in them.*

(z) Whatever is to be underſtood by this expreſſion, you ſee the ſame uſed, Eph. iii. 19, of the true followers of Chriſt.

1 Cor. iii. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the ſpirit of God dwelleth in you?*

So that we may hence infer, that in an inferior limited ſenſe, *Wiſdom became fleſh* or man, in the apoſtles of Chriſt, and in the firſt chriſtians; upon each of whom extraordinary divine gifts were beſtowed. This however is only mentioned to take off that air of myſtery, which has been thrown over this language concerning the Divine Wiſdom in Chriſt: from which ſtrange concluſions have been made, and the worſhip of the one true God the Father defaced, and nearly loſt among men.

VI.

We find that Eraſmus was greatly blamed by ſome Divines, for tranſlating the firſt verſe of St. John's goſpel; *In the beginning was—ſermo, ſpeech,* inſtead of *verbum, word.* But many of the latin fathers had ſo rendered the term, λογος, before him. It is of ſmall conſequence how it be rendered, ſo that it does not ſtand for Chriſt, as God and creator of all things; a conſtruction moſt contrary to the intention of the apoſtle, and in oppoſition to the whole tenor of the ſcriptures. There would be nothing wrong in ſtill continuing to tranſlate, *In the beginning was the Word*; if thereby be underſtood, not Chriſt, but the divine power and energy, by which all things were made, by which Chriſt was inſpired and directed. But in the tranſlations in our own tongue, it would be better

better no longer to ſay, *In the beginning was the word,* but rather *wiſdom:* becauſe all engliſh readers have ſo long been wont to aſſociate the term, *the Word,* with Chriſt as God, that they will be in danger of ſtill thinking Chriſt in that character to be meant by it, and not the Divine Wiſdom or Power, which is God himſelf.

VII.

This very groſs and fatal miſtake, of making the λογος, the word, in the beginning of St. John's goſpel, not to be an attribute of God, the divine wiſdom, power, &c; but a real perſon diſtinct from God, and the proper name of Chriſt, as a Being next or equal to God himſelf; has miſled for ages, and ſtill miſleads the chriſtian world in general. This you find in all writings of Divines, antient and modern. Look into commentaries, annotations upon the ſcriptures; conſult Lexicons, Dictionaries, and immediately you find, λογος, logos, *the word,* interpreted univerſally, *a name of Chriſt, the ſubſtantial word, the ſecond perſon of the Trinity,* &c. laying down this interpretation, and definition of the term, as a matter abſolutely fixed, and thus throwing a wrong bias on the minds of young ſcholars and heedleſs readers. But do you, who I truſt are now better informed, tell to every one that comes in your way, to inquire and judge for themſelves, and not to be impoſed upon by

the pretended authority of Divines, or books of the learned: Tell them, that they will find that the three former evangeliſts knew nothing of the bleſſed Jeſus being any other than a human being, and that therefore St. John's meaning is likely to be miſunderſtood by thoſe who would make him any other; and that the term, logos, the *Word*, *Wiſdom*, or whatever conſtruction be put upon it, cannot be a name of Chriſt, as a Divine Perſon, God, and creator of all things: but is the name and attribute of the Great God himſelf; his wiſdom, his word, or divine energy, by which he brought all things into being, and directs and governs them; which word or wiſdom was in an extraordinary degree imparted to Jeſus Chriſt, ſo that it might be ſaid to dwell in him.

VIII.

There are grounds to believe that this interpretation of the beginning of St. John's goſpel, which I truſt may be ſaid now to have been confirmed by a variety of arguments, was, from the firſt and for ſeveral centuries, held by thoſe chriſtians, who formed their opinions of their religion, from ſcripture, and not from philoſophy. But their books, or any juſt accounts of the men, have not been ſuffered to come down to us. We ſhould in all probability never have heard of the ſentiments of Marcellus, the unitarian biſhop of Ancyra in Galatia, in the 4th century, if Euſebius had

had not been excited *(a)* to write againſt him, on account of his charging himſelf, and ſome

 biſhops

(*a*) Euſebius, being a great biſhop, and having the ſecular power on his ſide, is very angry, and abuſive; accuſes Marcellus of judaiſm, and ſabellianiſm, which in thoſe days were but other words for unitarianiſm; and though a perſon of great learning and fine parts, he follows the vogue and prejudice of the times, and quotes ſcripture by rote without attending to what the ſacred writer intended by it. The following is a ſample of his manner in controverſy, from the beginning of his ſecond book againſt Marcellus.

'Having now,' ſays Euſebius, 'ſufficiently expoſed this 'Galatian's calumnies, (ſo he ſtiles Marcellus in contempt) 'it is time to drag to light his faith, or rather his infidelity (πιστιν 'η και μαλλον απιστιαν) towards the Son of God; that I may 'ſtrip the man's impious opinions of that plauſible covering 'under which they have long been maſked, and let all the 'world ſee, by his own teſtimony, who and what ſort of 'man he is, who has ſo long preſided in the church. For 'he makes no ſcruple in aſſerting, "that Chriſt was not the "the ſon of God, nor had any exiſtence, before he was born "of the virgin Mary;" maintaining, μηδε ειναι, μηδε προϋφιστα-ναι, μηδε ολως παντοδε υιον υπαρξαι τω Θεω, προ τε τεχθηναι δια της παρθενε, δοξαζων. Αυτον δε μονον ειναι λογον φασκων, συμφυα τω Θεω, αιδιως αυτω συνοντα και ηνωμενον, οιος αν ειη και ο εν ανθρωπω λογος. τουτω γαρ αυτον χρηται τω παραδειγματι. i.e. "that the Son was not, "nor ever preexiſted in any ſort, nor was with God, before "he was born of the virgin Mary. And that the logos, the "word, is nothing but an attribute of the Deity, coexiſting, "with and united to him, from all eternity, and the ſame in "God, that reaſon is in man:" for he makes uſe of this very compariſon. Euſeb. Op. Colon. 1688, contra Marcell. p. 31. 32.

biſhops, and other perſons, with not holding one God only, but two Gods: a firſt, unborn, without beginning; a ſecond God, as he objects to them, who was younger and inferior; and imputing this very juſtly to them, for making Chriſt, the logos, the word, mentioned by St. John, an inferior God, and creator, under the ſupreme. But Marcellus himſelf, as will farther appear, maintained, that the logos, the word, was only an attribute of God, his power and energy, which was ſometimes for a while communicated to his creatures, and then withdrawn, and that it was the ſame in God, as reaſon in man.

SECTION VI.

Of the other paſſages in St. John's goſpel, which are ſuppoſed to prove Chriſt to have exiſted in a former ſtate.

The preface of St. John's goſpel, which has been ſhewn to have been very erroneouſly produced as a proof of the divinity and preexiſtence of Chriſt, contains only the *words* and a remark *of John* himſelf. The other *ſuppoſed* proofs of Chriſt's divinity in our evangeliſt, which we proceed to examine, are taken from *his own words*; the firſt

firſt and the laſt only excepted. But before I lead you into a conſideration of them, I would remind you, of what cannot eſcape the attentive reader of the goſpel hiſtory, *viz.* that our Lord generally expreſſes himſelf in figurative (*b*) language, peculiar to thoſe eaſtern countries, and to the prophetic character. This is however more obſervable in our evangeliſt, than in the others; becauſe he records ſeveral of Chriſt's longer diſcourſes omitted by them; and thoſe eſpecially which he held with ſuch of the common people, who had wordly views in attending him, and with the rulers of the country, who were exaſperated againſt him for his ſelf-denying doctrine, and bold reproof of their vices: and to both of them, for reaſons well known and generally allowed, he was obliged to be on the reſerve in declaring himſelf the meſſiah, their heavenly prophet, and king, in ſo many words; and therefore he made uſe of circumlocutions, and metaphorical expreſſions; calling himſelf *the bread of* life, and ſaying, that he *came down from heaven*, that he was

(*b*) The truly learned Biſhop Pearce, at the end of his commentary on St. Matthew's goſpel, in a liſt of remarkable things, which he reckons up in it, inſerts the following, *viz.* 'That almoſt every where he (Matthew) makes Jeſus expreſs himſelf in a figurative ſtyle; which was the eaſtern manner.' If he had thought proper to have mentioned it, he would have ſaid, that this circumſtance was ſtill more remarkable in St. John.

was *the light of the world*; and *ſo on.* Taking this key along with you, there will be no great difficulty in coming at our Lord's meaning, in any of the language which he uſes concerning himſelf.

SECTION VII.

Of the teſtimony of John the Baptiſt to Chriſt.

John 1. 15. *He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was* before *me.* The laſt clauſe of this ſentence ſhould not have been put in ambiguous terms, to induce the mere engliſh reader to interpret it, as if the baptiſt had ſaid, that Jeſus, though ſomewhat younger than him, was nevertheleſs before him in time; intending thereby to denote a prior eternal exiſtence, which ſome would give him. A circumſtance of this very extraordinary kind, if true, would not have been once only conveyed in a doubtful phraſe, but frequently and explicitly mentioned. We may aſſure ourſelves then, that the baptiſt ſpeaks only of the dignity of Chriſt, and the ſuperior importance of his meſſage from God, that he was *before him* in that reſpect. And therefore it ſhould be rendered into engliſh, *for he was greater than me.* This is the ſenſe of the words given by Dr. Clarke in his paraphraſe; and it is acknowleged by the beſt critics to be a juſt tranſlation of them. See Glaſſius. Philol. Sacr.

Sacr. p. 274. Dr. Campbell *(c)* underſtands the words to imply priority of time, that Chriſt exiſted before John; but then he refers it not to the perſon of Jeſus, but to the λογος, the word, the wiſ. of God, dwelling in him: a ſenſe in which they may be taken, as L'Enfant before him obſerved, but who adopts the interpretation here given.

SECTION VIII.

Of the paſſages in St. John's goſpel, containing thoſe words of Chriſt himſelf, which are ſuppoſed to prove his having exiſted in a former ſtate.

John iii. 13. *No man hath aſcended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.* You will find by examples produced both from profane and ſacred authors, that to *aſcend up to heaven*, ſignifies to

(*c*) The paſſage, thus explained, yields a ſenſe which is both juſt and appoſite, there being at leaſt an apparent reference to the information the evangeliſt had given us concerning the λογος, *the word, or wiſdom*, in the beginning of the chapter." Campbell in loc. This is an interpretation to which an unitarian could make no objection, though the other more probably was intended by St. John.

L'Enfant's tranſlation of the verſe is; C'eſt ici celui, duquel j'ai dit; celui qui vient apres moi, m'eſt préferé, parcequ'il eſt plus grand que moi.

to be admitted into an extraordinary knowlege of the divine councils. I would particularly refer you to Raphelius the ſon, in his preface to his father's annotations on the ſcriptures, becauſe he was an excellent critic, of good ſenſe, and alſo a perſon who believed the divinity of Chriſt, though he could not find it here. And there you will ſee, that it was the ſentiment of learned and judicious chriſtians, as well his own, that our Saviour's intent in this paſſage, was to ſay; that no other of the human race, no prophet before him, was acquainted with the whole will of God for the ſalvation of the world, but himſelf.

But there is a difficulty notwithſtanding made by ſome, about the *coming down from heaven*, as if it implied Chriſt's having before his birth, lived in heaven, and that he literally came down from thence. This however has ariſen from an unwillingneſs in the ſame learned men, to loſe what they had long been accuſtomed to look upon as an argument of Chriſt having lived in heaven before he was born here; which prevented their examining and ſeeing, that *coming down from heaven* is equally figurative language with *aſcending up to heaven*, and is in other places uſed by our ſaviour to ſignify his having a divine commiſſion from heaven, or from God. This will by and by be proved in various inſtances.

The

The remaining clauſe of the ſentence, *even the Son of man, who is in heaven*; if it be not (*d*) an interpolation of ſome officious tranſcriber, cannot be taken literally. For the *Son of man* could not be in heaven, at the ſame time that he was upon earth. It is therefore by judicious commentators conſidered in the ſame light as John i. 18, *who is in the boſom of the Father*; as metaphorical language, in which our Lord loved to expreſs himſelf: and both of them to ſignify, the being admitted into the ſecret councils of God.

Matth. xi. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and* [*no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.*]

Juſtin Martyr cites the words within crotchets, as our Lord's cenſure of the jews for their ignorance of him as their delegated God, who ſpoke to Moſes, &c. acting under the ineffable God, and father of the univerſe. Apolog. i. p. 81. (*e*).

The

(*d*) It is wanting in two antient MSS. alſo in the Æthiopic verſion; and in Gregory Nazianzen, a writer of the 4th century.

(*e*) Euſebius Hiſt. Eccleſ. p. 4. after citing Iſa. liii. 8. and rendering it, *who ſhall declare his generation?* as a proof of Chriſt's divinity; adds this paſſage of Math. xi. 27. as a ſimilar declaration of Chriſt concerning himſelf. But his interpretation will be found in both caſes to be equally the language of imagination and prejudice, without due inquiry.

The paſſage is alſo produced by late writers, as teaching, that Chriſt is God equal to the Father, in all reſpects. It's true meaning can only be determined, by examining what our Saviour intended on the occaſion, and what his words would convey in the connection in which he uttered them, to thoſe that heard him.

Immediately before, upon reflection on the different behaviour of men towards him; the cool indifference *ver.* 20. of ſome, the malignant oppoſition *ver.* 19. of others, and the ardent zeal *ver.* 12. of many of the common people; you find our Lord breaking forth before his diſciples into this devout ejaculation: *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid; I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that having hid theſe things from learned and politic men, thou has revealed them unto babes. Even ſo, O Father! for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* As though he had ſaid in other words; "O thou kind author of my being and all it's bleſſings, and ſupreme lord of all; I acknowlege it to be a method of thy moral government, worthy of thine infinite wiſdom and impartial goodneſs; that whilſt the falſe maxims of the world, and the influence of irregular paſſions, blind the eyes of the learned and politically wiſe, that they cannot ſee thy heavenly truth which I teach them, it is gladly received by humble and inquiring minds, though of low worldly eſtimate."

Turning

Turning himſelf then to thoſe that were with him, he proceeds to ſay, not boaſting of himſelf, but properly aſſerting his divine commiſſion, as the Meſſiah; *All things have been delivered*, or taught me of my Father; *i. e.* all things relating to the goſpel and the final ſalvation of mankind; for the plain conſtruction of the paſſage confines the general term to that ſenſe.

And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; i. e. no one was acquainted with what he himſelf was to do and to ſuffer, and the happy conſequences of it, but God who had determined every thing before hand.

Neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son ſhall reveal him: *i. e.* Chriſt alone was favoured and commiſſioned by the Almighty, to inſtruct men in the knowlege of his will, and of the way to eternal life.

Here, you perceive, *(f)* is no rebuke of the jews, for any ignorance of Chriſt's *perſon*; no myſterious doctrine concerning *it*, as a thing known only to God and comprehenſible by him; no intimation

(*f*) Hardy, in his N. T. briefly and well expreſſes the ſenſe of the paſſage. Nemo cognoſcere poſſit, ſc. proprio marte, aut *Patris conſilia*, qua ratione homines ſervari velit, niſi Filius; aut *filii officium*, cujus cauſa venit, niſi Pater. *i. e.* "No one, by his own power, could know the deſign of the Father, by what method mankind were to be ſaved, but the Son; nor any one diſcover the office and duty of the Son, on what ſtrand he came, but the Father."

mation of any omniſcience of the Son equal to that of the Father, which ſome people imagine they find here. But the only knowlege ſpoken of, is that of the goſpel; the diſcovery of the divine everlaſting deſigns of mercy and goodneſs for the whole human race, which was given by the Almighty to Chriſt, to be communicated to the world.

SECTION IX.

The phraſes, *coming down from heaven, being ſent from God, ſent into the world, coming into the world, coming forth from the Father, proceeding forth,* and *coming from God*; when uſed of himſelf by Chriſt, in St. John's goſpel, ſignify his having a divine commiſſion, the being an extraordinary divine prophet or meſſenger.

There is no language more impoſing than this, upon readers of all degrees, who do not ſearch and ſtudy the ſcriptures for themſelves; rivetting in them ſo faſt the notion of Chriſt having lived in another world before he came into this, that it is rarely to be eradicated afterwards by the ſtrongeſt evidence to the contrary. But to you, that are coming into life, and whoſe prejudices are leſs fixed, I hope to make it clear and plain, and by our Saviour's own interpretation, that theſe forms of ſpeech, however they appear to ſound to the contrary, afford no proof of his having been in heaven,

heaven, or having had any exiſtence before that which he received at his birth in Judea.

1. Chriſt's *coming down from heaven*, and being *ſent from God*, which are equivalent expreſſions, ſignify only his being inveſted with a divine commiſſion.

John vi. 33. Jeſus ſaith, *The bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world*; ſtiling his doctrine which taught men the way to eternal life, *bread coming down from heaven*, becauſe he taught it by an authority from heaven, *i. e.* from God. In the ſame way of ſpeaking, at another time, he ſays, Matt. xxi. 25. that the baptiſm of John *came from heaven*, becauſe it was of divine authority. So that a doctrine is ſaid to come down from heaven, when taught by a perſon who has a divine commiſſion.

Soon after, John vi. 38. our Lords adds, *I came down from heaven*, not to do mine own will, but the will of him *that ſent me*; where he expounds his own coming down from heaven, to ſignify nothing more than his being ſent from God; the latter part of the ſentence being evidently ſynonymous with or explanatory of the former.

But the being *ſent from God* ſignifies only the being a prophet, or divine meſſenger. For it is

ſaid of John the Baptiſt, John i. 6, that he was a man *ſent from God.*

Therefore the language, *coming down from heaven,* ſignifying the ſame as being *ſent from God,* it might, from ſuch language, equally be concluded that John the Baptiſt had a prior exiſtence in another world, as that our Saviour exiſted in heaven, before he was born of his mother Mary. The fact is; it only proves concerning both, that they had an extraordinary commiſſion from God, were divine prophets or meſſengers.

2. Chriſt's being *ſent into the world,* ſignifies his having a divine commiſſion, as a prophet or teacher.

In his prayer to God, not long before his death, which has been preſerved by St. John, our Lord thus expreſſes himſelf to the heavenly Father, and author of his being, concerning his choſen diſciples; John xvii. 18. As thou haſt *ſent me into the world,* even ſo have I alſo *ſent them into the world.* In which words he cannot be ſaid to aſſert, that he had exiſted in another world before he came into this; becauſe in that caſe, it would be applicable to his diſciples, concerning whom he uſes the ſame language, that they had exiſted in another world: which is not to be ſuppoſed.

What our divine maſter really intended reſpecting them and himſelf, was, ſuitably and agreeably to the ſolemn occaſion, and to his own ſituation and

and character; to expreſs before the ſovereign diſpoſer of himſelf and all things, his attention to the important truſt that had been committed to him, in providing for the propagation of the truth after his own departure out of the world, which was ſoon to take place; and as he himſelf had been ſent into the world, *i. e.* had a ſpecial commiſſion and appointment from the heavenly Father to teach mankind, he had, by his divine (Luke vi. 12. 13. Acts i. 2.) direction, ſent into the world, *i. e.* appointed, and given theſe men his diſciples a commiſſion to ſucceed him in his office; and he now intreated the divine bleſſing upon them.

The expreſſion therefore of Chriſt's being *ſent into the world*, had no reference to any prior ſtate of exiſtence, but was purely declaratory in other words, of his having an extraordinary commiſſion from God, as a prophet, or teacher of his will and commands. And as we ſaw under the laſt head, that his *coming down from heaven*; *i. e.* from God, and his being *ſent into the world*, were phraſes preciſely of the ſame import; ſo, may we conclude, are, *his coming into the world* and *being ſent into the world.*

3. *Proceeding forth and coming from God, and coming forth from the Father, and coming into the world*, are uſed by our Lord, to expreſs his extraordinary commiſſion from God, his being the

Chriſt, the Meſſiah. John viii. 42. *Jeſus ſaid unto them; I proceeded forth,* ἐξηλθον, *and came from God: neither came I of myſelf, but he ſent me.* Our Lord here explains the terms he uſes; *viz.* that by *proceeding forth,* and *coming from God,* he intended his being *ſent by him,* which ſignifies his having an eſpecial divine commiſſion.

John xvi. 28. *I came forth,* ἐξηλθον, or *I proceeded forth* from the Father, and am come into the world. Now, in the former of theſe citations, we ſaw that *proceeding forth* from God, ſignified only the having an extraordinary commiſſion from him, therefore the ſame is the meaning of the like expreſſions here uſed by our Lord.

It follows therefore demonſtrably, by our Saviour's own expoſition, that *coming down from heaven, being ſent from God, being ſent into the world, proceeding forth and coming from God, coming forth from the Father,* and *coming into the world,* are all different expreſſions of one and the ſame thing; and do not refer to, or ſignify, any prior ſtate or condition of being, which Chriſt enjoyed before he was born, but denote only the having an extraordinary commiſſion from God to teach his will to mankind.

You may perhaps be ſomewhat diſturbed, that our Saviour, in ſpeaking concerning himſelf, ſhould uſe ſuch ambiguous terms, and liable to miſlead,

if

if taken in their literal meaning. But his countrymen, the jews, to whom he delivered himſelf, would be under no ſuch embaraſſment; and he muſt ſpeak to them in their own way, to make proper impreſſions on them: he could not do otherwiſe. When it was ſaid among them, that any man *came from heaven*, from God, they naturally and immediately underſtood it of coming as a prophet, with a divine commiſſion or meſſage. Chriſtians indeed, who come to the reading of the ſcriptures, already perſuaded, from the authority of their creeds and confeſſions of faith made by their prieſts, that Chriſt is God, or a great preexiſtent ſpirit, inſtantly apply ſuch language, without thought or examination, to confirm them in their prejudices. But if they would have the patience themſelves to conſult the ſacred writings, what they teach; and particularly, in the preſent inſtance, to let our Lord interpret his own words, theſe great errors concerning him, making him a different being from what he really is, might have been prevented; and it is in this way only that they can be rectified.

John vi. 62. *What and if ye ſhall ſee the Son of man aſcend up where he was before!* Theſe words, literally taken, contain not any abſolute declaration that Chriſt exiſted in a former ſtate, but that he had formerly been in heaven, and was to go thither again; which thing it is poſſible and

competent for a human creature to do, if it ſo pleaſe the Divine Being. And ſome chriſtians have concluded hence, and from other paſſages of ſcripture, that this was the fact, and that our Lord, a ſhort time before he entered on his public miniſtry, had been taken up into heaven to be inſtructed in the divine will and councils, which he was to communicate to the world; as St. Paul repreſents himſelf caught up to the *third heaven*; 2 Cor. xii. 2. But had this been the caſe with reſpect to Chriſt, it may be preſumed, that we ſhould have had more expreſs information of it.

Grotius, whoſe interpretations are generally curious, and important, ſays *(g)*; that Chriſt here attributes to himſelf, what belonged only to the Divine Wiſdom, the logos, the *Word*, with which he was always inſpired: ſpeaking as if he had been actually in heaven, becauſe the Divine Wiſdom, which was thus, in a figurative ſenſe, a part of him, was always with God in heaven.

(b) Dr. Lardner, who commends Grotius, adds; 'I have been apt to think, that thereby our Lord 'intended only to ſay, that he ſhould not always be

(*g*) Tribuit Chriſtus ſibi quod τω λογω (verbo) convenit; Quidni? cum et animum et corpus ſeorſum ſoleamus appellare hominis vocabulo, &c. Grotius in loc.

(*b*) Four Diſcourſes on Philip. ii. 5. in a poſthumous work, firſt publiſhed by the Rev. Mr. Wiche of Maidſtone: printed for Johnſon, St. Paul's Church-yard.

'be perſonally here, but ſhould leave this world: 'which was the moſt diſcouraging thought to all 'the carnal jews, and much ſuited to his purpoſe 'on the preſent occaſion.' And Biſhop Pearce remarks here in the ſame way; 'The death of 'Jeſus, and his abſence from them at that time, was 'a great ſtumbling block to his diſciples,' as appears from Luke xxiv. 21. 25. I would add, that thus we ſeem to have obtained a probable conſtruction of this profeſſedly ambiguous language, which our Lord uſes throughout this chapter, and in this particular part above the reſt. But ſhould we not have been able to develope it's meaning, will any be ſo injudicious as to ſay, that one obſcure paſſage concerning Chriſt is to be ſet up againſt the whole ſtream and tenor of the ſcripture declarations concerning him?

John viii. 58. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily, verily, I ſay unto you; before Abraham was I am.*

Thoſe who look upon Chriſt as the ſupreme God, reckon, that he here directly declares it, by taking to himſelf the proper name of God, Exod. iii. 14. which we tranſlate, *I am what I am.* But if St. John had entertained an idea of his divine maſter making this alluſion, he would have adopted the ſeptuagint verſion, as was cuſtomary with the writers of the New Teſtament, and would have introduced Chriſt ſaying, εγω ειμι ο ων, I am the ſelf-exiſtent Being; which would have

put the matter out of all doubt: whereas the words he now uſes, convey nothing of the ſort, and will by no means bear ſuch conſtruction.

For it has been obſerved by the beſt critics, that the phraſe εγω ειμι, *I am*, is never uſed abſolutely in the New Teſtament, but always with relation to ſome ſubject in hand. Now if we inquire what it is that our Lord refers to here, it is moſt probably to his own declaration, with which he ſets out, in the beginning of theſe mens cavil and diſpute with him, ver. 12. *I am the light of the world*; aſſerting himſelf to be the Meſſiah, the Chriſt, in language borrowed from their antient prophets. And therefore the words ſhould have been tranſlated before Abraham was, I am *the light of the world*, *i. e.* the Chriſt.

It is remarkable, that our engliſh tranſlators, twice in this very chapter, ver. 24. 28. have rendered the words in queſtion, εγω ειμι, I am *he*, that is, *the Chriſt:* ſuppoſing on good grounds the expreſſion to be elliptical, and referring to ſomething that our Lord would have to be underſtood concerning himſelf: but it would have been better to have marked his meaning (*i*) exactly, by

(*i*) See "Obſervations upon the expedience of reviſing the preſent engliſh verſion of the four goſpels, and of the Acts of the Apoſtles, by John Symonds, L.L.D." p. 34: a valuable work, that muſt be of great uſe, whenever a new verſion is undertaken.

by putting, I am the light of the world; or I am the Chriſt, inſtead of I am *he*. And it may well be preſumed, that they would have tranſlated the ſame phraſe here, ver. 58. before, Abraham was, I am *he*, as they had tranſlated it twice before in the ſame chapter, if they had not been hindered by their prejudices, and perſuaſion, that Chriſt was the moſt high God, and been unwilling to part with a text, which they thought made ſo greatly for it.

With reſpect to our Lord here ſaying, that he was the Chriſt before Abraham was; it is an idiom of ſpeech familiar with the ſacred writers, to affirm things or perſons to exiſt, when it was only an exiſtence in the divine foreſight and councils, to take place in ſome future time. Thus Rev. xiii. 8. Chriſt is called *the lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*. Eph. i. 4. Chriſtians are ſaid to have *been choſen before the foundation of the world*. Matt. xxv. 3. Our Saviour ſpeaks of the future, happineſs of his faithful followers being *prepared* for them *from the foundation of the world*. And ſo Chriſt ſaid that he was before Abraham, *i. e.* in the divine deſignation and appointment of him, as the Meſſiah.

The interpretation here furniſhed to you of theſe words of Chriſt, is not forced, or foreign, but in perfect agreement with the grammatical conſtruction of them, and with the hebrew phraſeology.

But

But the ſenſe uſually put upon them, is ungrammatical, ſtrange, and confounding to the rational mind. For however, we, chriſtians, through cuſtom from our childhood, can bear it, the jews in our Saviour's time, and indeed to do them juſtice, now, and at all times, would have been ſhocked at the moſt diſtant idea, of a mortal man, ſuch as our Saviour ſtood before them, and always owned himſelf, being at the ſame time, the moſt high and eternal God, Jehovah, the God of their fathers.

In fine, ſuppoſing, if it be poſſible to be ſuppoſed, that this was true; is it credible, that our Lord ſhould, in ſuch a way, tell a ſett of men, who reviled him in the moſt odious terms, and were purſuing his life; tell them, that he was the moſt high God in ſuch direct terms, as is ſuppoſed, a thing ſo wondrous, which he kept intirely ſecret from his apoſtles, and never told them in any ſhape. No: no: our Lord threw out this ambiguous phraſe to mortify thoſe incorrigible men the more, although they might have readily underſtood him, if their minds had not been ſo heated, and exaſperated againſt him. Wetſtein, after producing various other inſtances in the evangeliſts, of εγω ειμι, *I am*, being an elliptical expreſſion, and ſigifying, I am the Chriſt, the Meſſiah; concludes thus. 'If 'therefore we interpret the phraſe in the ſame 'way here, John viii. 58. it will be as if our 'Lord

'Lord had ſaid; I am the Meſſiah, promiſed to 'Adam, Enoch, Noah, and the patriarchs, and 'expected long before Abraham was born.'

John xvii. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world began!*

You have ſeen from our Saviour's own interpretation of that language, which he uſes concerning himſelf, of his *coming down from heaven, coming into the world, coming forth from the Father, being before Abraham*, and the like; that he is far from intending thereby to teach, that he had an exiſtence in another world, before he was born in Judea. And yet it is principally on account of theſe paſſages of ſcripture, and of that which we are now to diſcuſs, of his *praying for the glory which he had with the Father before the world was*, that ſuch outcries have been raiſed againſt thoſe who cannot ſee any force in them, or underſtand, that Chriſt himſelf meant thereby, to prove his preexiſtence, as it is called. And they are particularly branded with the name of *Socinians*, as conveying the idea of ſomething very horrid in their opinions; although *Socinus*, from whom the name is given them, was an eminent ſervant of God, raiſed up to reform the chriſtian world, loſt in idolatry and ignorance of the one living and true God; and to ſay the leaſt of him, was not inferior in piety and virtue to Luther, Calvin, or any of our

engliſh

engliſh reformers; and in the knowlege of the ſcriptures, much their ſuperior.

We are accuſed, (that I may rank myſelf in a liſt of which there is no cauſe to be aſhamed) and condemned, unheard, for contradicting and denying the literal and obvious ſenſe of ſcripture. Allowing the accuſation to be juſt, it does not follow, that ſuch perſons are in the wrong. For there may be an obvious ſenſe of a paſſage in a writer, which is not the true one. We read, for example, John vi. 58, &c. *Then Jeſus replied; verily, verily, I ſay unto you, except* ye eat the fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, *ye have no life in you. Whoſo* eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, *hath eternal life: and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day. For my fleſh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* In ſuch inſtances, you heſitate not to reject the literal and obvious or apparent ſenſe, without ſcruple. And as our Lord in the foregoing citations of his words, has ſhewn you, that the literal meaning of his *coming down from heaven*, and the like, was not intended by him, I have no doubt of your being convinced by him now, that he does not here pray for any glory of which he had been actually poſſeſſed; and therefore that his words afford no proof of his having exiſted in a former ſtate.

Undoubtedly, at firſt ſight, they bear the appearance of it. *Father, glorify thou me, with thine ownſelf,*

ownſelf, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was.

But firſt, let us ſee what he teaches concerning this glory that he here ſpeaks of. A day or two before that our Lord uttered theſe words in prayer with his diſciples; when *certain Greeks,* or devout gentiles who had come up to worſhip the true God at Jeruſalem, deſired to have acceſs to him, we are told he broke out into this joyful exclamation—John xii. 23. 24. *Jeſus anſwered them; the hour is come, that the Son of man ſhall be glorified. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* Although ſenſible that his own violent death muſt lead the way to it, he rejoices in the near proſpect of his being glorified, that is, of attaining the glory he aimed at, in the heathen world being brought to the knowlege of the truth, and to eternal life, by the preaching of the goſpel: for ſo the occaſion plainly leads us to underſtand his words. The *glory* of Chriſt therefore, from his own account of it, was, that by the effectual propagation of the goſpel, he might become the happy inſtrument of the ſalvation of mankind.

That this is a juſt account of the *glory,* for which Chriſt now made his ſupplication to Almighty God, is confirmed by what he goes on to ſay in his prayer concerning it; that he had promiſed

miſed his diſciples that they ſhould be ſharers with him in it, ver. 22. *And the glory which thou haſt given me, I have given them: that they may be one, as we are one.* For there was no other glory in common with Chriſt and his apoſtles, or which was likely to occur to his mind at that time, but what related to the ſucceſs of the goſpel, which he was ſending them forth to propagate over the whole earth. And that it was not any thing belonging to him as a preexiſtent being, but ſomething hitherto not actually enjoyed by him or his diſciples, yet moſt ſurely to be expected, is evident from the ſame form of expreſſion which he uſes with regard to both him and them. *The glory*, ſays he, *which thou* haſt given *me*, *I have* given *them:* he had not actually given it to them, for they were not in the poſſeſſion of it; but he had made them an abſolute promiſe of it, as God had made to him; that they, together with himſelf, ſhould have the honour of contributing to the virtue and everlaſting happineſs of all men by the goſpel.

This is further confirmed by what our Lord alſo declares, that the glory which he prayed for, was to be ſomething conſequent upon, and a reward of his fidelity and labours in the work aſſigned him by Almighty God, and therefore could not have been before enjoyed by him. ver. 4. *I have finiſh-*

ed

ed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me, &c.

I ſpare to ſpeak of the incongruity, might I not ſay, the abſurdity, of making our Lord ſupplicate as a reward of his ſervices, what, according to their ſuppoſition, could be no reward, nothing but what he had enjoyed before from all eternity. As to the nonſenſe of Chriſt being poſſeſſed of *two natures*, or *two capacities*, and his praying only for his human nature or capacity to be exalted and rewarded; it is an interpretation that muſt be left to be received by thoſe who can believe and ſwallow ſuch things.

Our Lord's ſaying, that he *had this glory with the Father before the world was*, though he had not yet enjoyed it, that is, had it deſtined or deſigned for him by the Father, is an inſtance of the ſame peculiarity of phraſe mentioned above p. 73. common to our Lord himſelf, and the New-Teſtament-writers, in ſpeaking of things as exiſting, when it was only an exiſtence in the divine decree and appointment, to take place at ſome future time. To the examples there alleged, may be added, 1 Pet. i. 20. *that Chriſt was foreordained before the foundation of the world*; Acts iii. 20. *that he was before appointed*; *i. e.* deſtined beforehand in the divine councils to be ſent to us; and 2 Tim. i. 9. that God's grace, or favour was

given

given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began (k).

Of the apoſtle Thomas's ſaying to Chriſt, on being convinced, that he was actually raiſed from the dead.

John xx. 28. *And Thomas anſwered and ſaid, unto him; my Lord, and my God.*

I ſhall give you what I have no doubt will appear to you moſt ſatisfactory, the remarks of Dr. Whitby, upon this paſſage in our evangeliſt, in his (*l*) "Laſt Thoughts," to which he prefixes this

(*k*) The interpretation of this paſſage, that Chriſt had glory with the Father before the world was in this ſenſe only, becauſe it was what was deſigned and decreed beforehand for him; is well exemplified by Clemens Alexandrinus, who ſpeaks of this honourable notice from Almighty God, being a peculiar privilege of chriſtians in general; προ δε της του κοσμου καταβολης ημεις, ſays he, οι, τω θεω εστεθαι, εναυλω προλαβον γεγενημενοι τω θεω. *i. e.* We chriſtians, ſays he, were before the foundation of the world; for we then preexiſted in God, who had decreed our future exiſtence. Ed. Potter. p. 6.

(*l*) If the publiſher and venders of Dr. Whitby's Paraphraſe and Commentary on the New Teſtament, would deal honeſtly by that celebrated author and moſt upright man, and act faithfully towards the public, they ſhould reprint and annex to that work, this tract, whoſe title at length is 'ΤΣΤΕΡΑΙ 'ΦΡΟΝΤΙΔΕΣ. Or, The Laſt Thoughts of Dr. Whitby. 'Containing his correction of ſeveral paſſages in his commen-'tary on the New Teſtament. To which are added, Five 'Diſcourſes. Publiſhed by his expreſs order. London, 1727.'

this declaration:—'I proceed now to expound 'ſome paſſages of ſcripture, which ſeem to have 'been miſunderſtood by moſt modern expoſitors, 'and ſometimes alſo by *myſelf*.

'Nor can Chriſt's being God equal to the Father 'be inferred from thoſe words of Thomas, *my Lord,* '*and my God*; as will appear from this conſideration, 'that the faith of Thomas was only this, that Jeſus 'was really riſen from the dead. For when the a-'poſtles had told him, that they had ſeen the Lord, 'he anſwers, *except I ſhall ſee in his hands the* '*prints of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his* '*ſide, I will not believe it.* Then Chriſt coming a 'ſecond time, ſaith unto him, *Reach hither thy fin-*'*ger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy* '*hand, and thruſt it into my ſide, and be not faith-*'*leſs but believing*; viz. *believing* that *I am riſen.* 'Our Saviour then ſaith, *Thomas, becauſe thou haſt* '*ſeen me, thou haſt believed*; which ſhews, that he 'could believe only what he had ſeen, to wit, that 'the ſame body was raiſed, which had been cru-'cified. Neither had he ſeen, nor could he ſee 'with his bodily eyes, that he who was thus raiſed, 'was his Lord and his God.

'The words therefore, *My Lord, and my God,* 'may have this import; *My Lord and my God have* '*done this*; and ſo they exactly agree with the faith 'of the apoſtles, *the God of our fathers raiſed up*

'*Jeſus, whom ye ſlew and hanged on a tree.* Acts v. '20. See ii. 24. iii. 15. iv. 10. xiii. 30. or thus, '*My Lord, and my God,* how great is thy power! 'for ſaith St. Paul, *God exerted the greatneſs of his* '*power and the activity of his might, in raiſing our* '*Lord Jeſus from the dead.* Eph. i. 19. 20. But 'whether this be the true import of Thomas's words 'or no, certain it is, that it cannot be proved, that 'he intended by them to ſignify that he owned Jeſus 'Chriſt as his Lord and his God." Whitby's Laſt Thoughts, p. 28. 29.

Dr. Whitby is not ſingular, or original, in this judicious reaſoning upon the exclamation of the apoſtle Thomas. It was adopted by a very able interpreter of ſcripture, at the latter end of the 4th century, Theodore (*m*) Biſhop of Mopſueſtia in Cilicia; whoſe words I give in the margin. If any thing ſhould be thought neceſſary to confirm his judgment, that Thomas did not intend to call Chriſt, Lord or God; I would mention that St. John, the writer of this goſpel, cannot be ſuppoſed to be ſo inconſiſtent, as to put down a ſaying of his

(*m*) In his commentary on St. John's goſpel, Theodore ſays, 'that when Thomas made that confeſſion to Chriſt, my Lord, 'and my God, John xx. 28. he did not call Chriſt, Lord and 'God: but being aſtoniſhed at the great miracle of his reſur-'rection, and the full evidence of it, which had been afforded 'to him, he *praiſed* GOD, who had raiſed Chriſt from the 'dead. *Nor is the being raiſed from the dead a proof of deity.*' Lardner's Works. Vol. iv. p. 514. 515.

his fellow-apoſtle, flatly oppoſing a declaration of his divine maſter Jeſus himſelf, a few verſes before; whom he introduces declaring, John xx. 17. that ſo far from being God himſelf, he had the ſame God and Father in common with his diſciples. And moreover, the ſuppoſition of Thomas here calling Chriſt, God, is overruled and confuted by the fact related, Acts iv. 23, &c. where all the apoſtles, and Thomas therefore it may be preſumed along with them, join in ſolemn prayer, in which Jeſus is twice called *the ſervant* of the ſupreme Being, and creator of all things, to whom they addreſs themſelves. And it is not poſſible, that any one ſhould be the eternal God, and his ſervant at the ſame time.

COROLLARY.

Thus, upon very particular inquiry, we have found, that the evangeliſt St. John had no new doctrine to deliver, concerning his maſter Jeſus Chriſt, different from the other apoſtles. He intirely agrees with them, in deſcribing our Lord, as one of the human race, ſent from God, or commiſſioned as a divine meſſenger or prophet, to teach his will to mankind. And as to thoſe expreſſions of his *coming into the world, coming down from heaven, coming forth from the Father*, &c; from our Lord's own explanation of them we have

been inſtructed, that they had no reference to his having lived in heaven before he came upon this earth, but are only declaratory in other words, in the prophetic eaſtern ſtile, of his high office and commiſſion from Almighty God, as the Chriſt, the Meſſiah.

So that by the teſtimony of two of the hiſtorians of Chriſt's life, who were his apoſtles, and intimately acquainted with him; and of two others of them, who lived on moſt friendly terms, and converſed with his apoſtles, we are aſſured, that our Lord was not God, nor a preexiſtent being; but was a human creature, like others, excepting the extraordinary power which he received from God, to fit him for his office under his moral government, as teacher and Saviour of mankind.

SECTION VIII.

Of the deſign of St. Luke's ſecond treatiſe, called THE ACTS.

One of theſe writers of the memoirs of our Lord's life, St. Luke, was directed by a good providence, in continuation of that work, to give us a hiſtory of the way in which his divine maſter's religion, after his death and reſurrection, was propagated over a great part of the known world; and

and hath acquainted us particularly with the extraordinary divine interpoſitions, by which it was confirmed and eſtabliſhed; and the manner in which it was preached to jews and heathens.

An authentic narrative of facts like theſe, is of the utmoſt moment. And the evidence reſulting from them is moſt convincing, and irreſiſtible, for the truth of the goſpel in general, and alſo for this particular fact, that there is but one God, the Father of the univerſe, and that Jeſus, who was one of the hebrew nation, was the ſervant of that God, raiſed up and employed by him on his high commands.

But as ſome have ſought of late to invalidate the moſt ſolid proofs, which this latter treatiſe of St. Luke's affords for the Divine Unity and the proper humanity of Jeſus Chriſt, I ſhall hope to do ſome ſervice by a full exhibition, with brief remarks, of his teſtimony to both of them.

Of the teſtimony to the perſon and character of Jeſus Chriſt, as the ſervant of the one only true God, the Father, furniſhed by St. Luke, in his ſecond treatiſe, called The Acts of the Apoſtles.

Acts i. 14. *Theſe all continued, with one accord, in prayer and ſupplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jeſus, and his brethren.* Mary is here called the mother of Jeſus,

Acts. and ſome other perſons, his brethren or kinſmen. If therefore they were human creatures, he that was of their kindred, and the ſon of one of them, muſt have been alſo a human creature. You will obſerve that our Lord is thus characterized after his reſurrection, and exaltation in heaven.

i. 24. *And they* (the eleven apoſtles) *prayed, and ſaid, Thou, Lord, who knoweſt the hearts of all men, ſhew, whether of theſe two thou haſt choſen.* The ambiguity of the word, Κυριος, Lord, in the greek original, promiſcuouſly applied to God, and to his creatures, has led many who had already taken up an erroneous perſuaſion that Jeſus was the eternal God, to imagine, that it was to him that the apoſtles now prayed. And this, if true, would doubtleſs be a proof of his divinity.

But you will eaſily perceive this to be a very great miſtake. For the ſacred writings, conſtantly and invariably teſtify, that there is but one perſon, one LORD Jehovah, who knoweth the hearts of men. 1 Kings viii. 39. *For* THOU, O Jehovah, THOU *only knoweſt the hearts of all the children of* MEN. See Jerem. xvii. 10. &c. &c. And that it was God, and not Jeſus Chriſt, who

Acts. who was the perſon intended here; our hiſtorian teaches a little afterwards, xv. 8. where he ſays, God, *who knoweth the hearts, bare them witneſs.*

Moreover, although it has been alleged, that Chriſt ſaith of himſelf, Rev. ii. 23. *I am he who ſearcheth the reins and hearts:* it ſhould be attended to at the ſame time, that the writer begins this book of *the Revelation*, with declaring, that Jeſus Chriſt had received the whole of what he therein reveals, from God *(n)*; ſo that the knowlege of the hearts that he ſpeaks of went not farther than was given him upon the occaſion. This interpretation will receive more confirmation, if needed, by what will farther appear in the progreſs of St. Luke's hiſtory, concerning the light in which the apoſtles conſidered their maſter Jeſus, and the uniform direction of their prayers to God only.

(n) Revel. i, 1. *The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, which* God gave *unto him.*

The teſtimony of Peter and the other eleven apoſtles, concerning Chriſt, after his reſurrection, and exaltation in heaven.

Acts ii. 22. 24. *Ye men of Iſrael, hear theſe words. Jeſus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him, in the midſt of you, as ye yourſelves alſo know: him, by wicked hands, ye have crucified and ſlain.* Words could not eaſily be deviſed, that ſhould with more exactneſs delineate one of the human race, than thoſe which the apoſtle uſes to deſcribe his maſter Jeſus to his countrymen, as a mere man, like one of them, acting with an authority from God, of which he gave proof by the extraordinary powers he received from God. Such language is too plain and deciſive, to need dwelling or expatiating upon it. It tells at once the opinion (o) *of all the apoſtles*, who their divine maſter was.

Acts ii.

(o) At the beginning of Peter's ſpeech, ver. 11. it is ſaid, *Peter ſtanding up* with the eleven, *lifted up his voice, and ſaid*; &c. He was therefore the ſpokeſman of the other apoſtles, and may certainly be preſumed to deliver their ſentiments no leſs than his own.

Acts ii. 30. *Therefore* (David) *being a prophet, and knowing, that God had ſworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the fleſh* (better rendred *by natural deſcent*) *he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit upon his throne,*—Peter here again repreſents his maſter Jeſus, as one of David's family, deſcended from him; like him therefore, a human being.

33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the holy ſpirit, he (p) hath ſhed*

(*p*) I would propoſe only to your conſideration, whether, though Chriſt is mentioned, God alone is not to be conſidered as the agent, agreeably to the general language of the prophets, and to that of our Lord in particular upon this ſubject. For it is cuſtomary with the prophets to ſay, that they did or will do certain extraordinary things, when it was only intended that God, who ſent them, (Deut. xi, 14. 15. xvi. 22.) did or would do them according to their word. So when our Lord ſays, John xiv. 13. 14. *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in my name,* that will I do, *that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ſhall aſk any thing in my name, I will do it:* it is not probably his own perſonal agency that Chriſt here ſpeaks of, but only that God would anſwer their prayer according to the promiſe from him, which he had made them. And this conſtruction ſeems confirmed by John xv. 16. xvi. 23. *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk of the Father in my name,* he will give *it you*; where, *note*, God himſelf is by our Lord ſaid, to be the agent, the doer of the things, which in the preceding paſſage

Acts. *ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear.* The apoſtle refers to the recent gift of tongues, of ſpeaking in languages they had never learned. which had been that very day only imparted to them. And in the connection of his diſcourſe, nothing more can be inferred from it, than that Jeſus, the perſon he had been juſt deſcribing, being taken up, and raiſed to dignity in the inviſible world, had, in ſome way or other, been the inſtrument of God, in communicating this gift to his apoſtles.

ii. 36. *Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* It was remarked above, p. 86. that the ambiguous ſignification of the term, Κυριος, *Lord*, in the Septuagint and in the New Teſtament, which is applied indifferently to Almighty God, and to other perſons in dignity and authority, has given a handle to unlearned, heedleſs, and prejudiced readers of the ſcripture, to make Jeſus

paſſage he had ſaid, that he (Chriſt) ſhould do: In the ſame way, Chriſt's promiſe, Luke xxi. 15. of himſelf *giving a mouth and wiſdom to his diſciples, which their adverſaries would not be able to gainſay or reſiſt*, is to be underſtood of the holy ſpirit, i. e. the extraordinary gifts and aſſiſtance, which God would beſtow upon them, acording to Chriſt's promiſe,

Acts. Jeſus Chriſt to be the eternal God. But here all ambiguity is taken away, in the application of the word, Κυριος, *Lord*, to Jeſus Chriſt. For this declaration of the apoſtle Peter, in his own name and that of his fellow-diſciples, who could not be ignorant of the quality and condition of their maſter Jeſus, teaches us; that the name, *Lord*, as well as *Chriſt*, whatever office or preeminence is to be underſtood by them, belongs to Jeſus, from the gift and appointment of God. This is alſo confirmed by the apoſtle Paul, who had part of his inſtruction concerning the goſpel, from our Saviour himſelf, after he was taken up into heaven; and who ſays, Philip. ii. 8. &c. that *becauſe Chriſt Jeſus humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: Therefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and of his ſpecial favour beſtowed upon him,* εχαρισατο, *a name above every name——that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.*

It follows hence, by the teſtimony of *all* the apoſtles, that the bleſſed Jeſus is only ſuch a *Lord*, as it hath pleaſed God to make him. It follows alſo, and you will do well to keep it always in memory, that

that this word Κυριος, *Lord*, when it ſtands for Almighty God, in the Bible, cannot belong to Jeſus Chriſt; who is only a Lord, made and appointed by God.

Acts iii. 6. *In the name of Jeſus of Nazareth, riſe up and walk.* When a miraculous cure was to be wrought, to convince men of the divine authority of Jeſus and his religion, his apoſtles Peter and John, although he was then in a ſtate of exaltation in heaven, do nevertheleſs call him the man of Nazareth, the great prophet, who, for ſo long a ſpace, had his abode in that obſcure town. They do not ſay, "Be thou healed in the name of "the *Word incarnate, or of God the ſon, or of* "*the ſecond perſon in the Trinity.*" The apoſtles were not acquainted with any ſuch character or perſon.

13. *The God of Abraham, and of Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God of our father, hath glorified his* (q) ſervant *Jeſus.*

Here

(q) Bengelius, renders it, miniſtrum ſuum, his ſervant; and refers it to Matth. xii. 18. where the evangeliſt cites the Almighty, in Iſaiah xlii. 1. ſtiling the future Chriſt, *my ſervant.* See alſo xlix. 3. 5. Our Lord's language was uniformly in exact agreement with this, calling himſelf, him whom God hath ſent; i. e. his meſſenger, his ſervant. *Reader, whoever thou art, preſume not then, to call Jeſus, God,*

whom

Here our Saviour is diſtinguiſhed from God, as being his ſervant.

Juſtin Martyr, many of the antient and modern chriſtian writers, Mr. Whiſton, Dr. Clarke, the late Ben Mordecai, Mr. Taylor, are all of them here confuted in their aſſertions, that Jeſus Chriſt was the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, who appeared to Moſes: for the apoſtle ſtiles him only the ſervant of that God.

Acts iii. 14. — *But ye denied the holy one and the juſt.* It might with more propriety, nay ought to be tranſlated; *But ye denied that holy and juſt man.* And yet there are ſcholars in our day, who, caught by the mere ſound in engliſh, and too much bent on finding Chriſt's divinity every where, can fancy they have diſcovered a proof of it here; and, merely this, becauſe Almighty God, by the prophets, is alſo frequently ſtiled *the holy one*, by way of eminence; i. e. holy in the higheſt degree; others being holy only in different degrees, all at an infinite diſtance from him: and Chriſt, and all

whom God calls his ſervant, and who calls himſelf God's ſervant! And do thou no more worſhip and pray to the ſervant; but worſhip God!

all other beings are excluded by the very term.

Acts iii. 15. *And killed the prince of life.* The reading, which our tranſlators have put in the margin, being, *killed the author of life*, ſome perſons have laid hold of it, as teaching that Chriſt muſt have had life in himſelf from all eternity, and of courſe be the eternal God. But they did not ſufficiently conſider, that the life the apoſtle is ſpeaking of, is eternal life; and that the proper meaning of the word αρχηγον, is the chief leader or conductor, and that the paſſage ought to be tranſlated, killed the *leader to life (r)*; which puts an end to all ſuch fond and polytheiſtical imaginations.

22. *For Moſes truly ſaid unto the fathers: a prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me: unto him ſhall ye hearken in all things.* The Meſſiah, Chriſt, is here mentioned by the apoſtle to have been promiſed by Almighty God to Moſes; and he is deſcribed, ſo many ages before he had exiſtence, intirely as one of the human race, and of the hebrew nation. As ſuch the nation always

(r) Hardy, in his Gr. Teſt. has a good remark upon the place. 'Principem vitæ; i. e. cum qui unus eſt dux ad vitam eternam. *The prince of life*; i. e. him who is the only guide to life eternal.'

Acts. ways expected him: and as ſuch the apoſtle ſpeaks of him; not as belonging to any higher claſs of beings, much leſs as the eternal God.

iii. 26. *Unto you firſt, God having raiſed up his* ſervant(*s*) *Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.* Jeſus is again ſtiled God's ſervant, by the apoſtle Peter, when deſcribing him to his countrymen.

iv. 10. *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Iſrael, that by the name of Jeſus Chriſt of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God*

(*s*) Dr. Jortin, in a diſcourſe on this text, through an inattention not common to him, falls into very great miſtakes: firſt, by wrongly tranſlating the word, παῖδα, as if it was υἱον, thy *ſon*, inſtead of thy *ſervant*; next in deſcanting largely on the phraſe, *Son of God*, as intimating the divinity of Chriſt's perſon. His friend Biſhop Pearce, or his own admirable critical abilities, had he made uſe of them here, would have taught him, that in the writings of the evangeliſts, *Son of God*, and *the Chriſt*, *the Meſſiah*, are ſynonymous; and alſo that no metaphyſical, unintelligible generation is to be underſtood by the former phraſe, *Son of God*. But we are to remember, that though his ſermons are in general the beſt, the moſt liberal, and the moſt uſeful of any in our language, the three laſt volumes were poſthumous, and not always the moſt judiciouſly ſelected. I have mentioned this with no other view, but to prevent the name of this ingenious and moſt pleaſing writer, and excellent man, from miſleading his readers in a matter of ſome importance.

Acts. *God raiſed from the dead, even by him doth this man ſtand here before you whole.* Certainly the numerous hearers of the apoſtle Peter would underſtand him to ſpeak only of Jeſus, as a human creature, (highly favoured of God,) like themſelves; one, who was their great expected prophet, and whoſe principal abode, for the firſt and greateſt part of his life, was at Nazareth. The apoſtles were not aſhamed of their lord and maſter Jeſus having been originally a mortal man of low condition, and no education; but gloried in it. For this ſhewed the more evidently, that his extraordinary wiſdom and powers were from God, as he conſtantly declared; and that he was commiſſioned by him.

Acts iv. 23, 31. *And they, the apoſtles Peter and John, being ſet at liberty, went to their own company,* viz. the reſt of the apoſtles and other principal followers of Chriſt then at Jeruſalem, *and reported all that the chief prieſts and elders had ſaid unto them*; who had threatened them with further puniſhment, if they dared *to ſpeak at all, or to teach in the name of Jeſus. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God, with one accord, and ſaid,* Δεσπότα, *Sovereign Lord of all, thou art the God, who haſt*

made

Acts. *made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy ſervant David haſt ſaid, why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth ſtood up, and the rulers were gathered together againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt. For of a truth, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles, and the people of Iſrael, were gathered together againſt thy holy* ſervant *Jeſus, whom thou haſt anointed, to do whatſoever thy hand and thy counſel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatnings, and grant unto thy ſervants, that with all boldneſs they may ſpeak thy word, by ſtretching forth thy hand to heal, and that ſigns and wonders may be done in the name of thy holy* ſervant *Jeſus.*

Here we have a model of chriſtian worſhip, in what will be acknowleged a truly primitive church, compoſed of the apoſtles, of our Lord's mother Mary, and his relations, i. 14. and other diſciples of Chriſt. And their example will be allowed by all chriſtians of a ſound mind, to be worthy of our regards, and imitation. The moſt ſtriking circumſtance is the OBJECT of their worſhip. This is God only; the ſingle perſon of the creator of all things. There

Acts. are no invocations of *God the ſon, of God the holy Ghoſt*, or of a *holy, bleſſed and glorious Trinity*, compoſed of three divine perſons. Their prayers are directed to the ſingle perſon of the ſovereign Lord of all, the creator of all things, intreating his extraordinary aid, in ſupport of the religion, which his holy ſervant Jeſus had delivered to them.

2. In the devotions of theſe truly primitive chriſtians, Jeſus Chriſt is ſo far from being reckoned God, or an object of worſhip; that he is therein ſtiled, after his reſurrection and exaltation in heaven, the ſervant of that God to whom they addreſs their prayer. And the ſame term is uſed in the original, παις, when they call David, as when they call Jeſus, God's ſervant.

3. It is referred to your judgments, whether, with this example of the apoſtles before us, when we ſpeak of Chriſt in our addreſſes to the Almighty, it would not be proper ſometimes to ſay thy ſervant Jeſus, and not always thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, as is commonly done in the prayers of chriſtians. Certainly, if this apoſtolic pat-

tern

Acts. tern of prayer had been copied in this reſpect, by all chriſtians, from the beginning, it might have given ſome check to the groundleſs, unintelligible doctrine of an eternal generation of Chriſt as the *Son of God*; and might have preſerved them from that ſad degradation of the infinite Being, in putting the bleſſed Jeſus, his ſervant, upon a level with him, and paying equal honour, reverence and worſhip to the ſervant, as to the ſovereign lord and creator.

4. As the apoſtle John joined in this prayer with the other apoſtles and chriſtians that were aſſembled, if he did not himſelf lead their devotions; we may hence moſt aſſuredly conclude, that, in the beginning of his goſpel, he could never call Chriſt, the logos, *God, the word*, by whom all things were created. For this would have been acting in direct contradiction to what he himſelf here aſſerts, and agrees to, in conjunction with all the other apoſtles; that Jeſus was the ſervant of that God who made the world and all things in it. And this may ſerve to confirm the interpretation above aſſigned, of this preface of John's goſpel, *viz.* that the *logos*, the word, or wiſdom, which he there ſpeaks of, by which all things were made,

could not be Jeſus Chriſt; but was the word or wiſdom of God, which is God himſelf, the ſole creator of all things.

Acts v. 3. 4. 9. *Peter ſaid, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the holy ghoſt? why haſt thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou haſt not lied unto men, but unto God.— How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the ſpirit of the Lord?* If inſtead of *the holy ghoſt*, which by cuſtom and long habit leads chriſtians ſuperſtitiouſly educated, to think that it is a divine perſon, that is here ſpoken of, the word πνευμα had been tranſlated *ſpirit, (holy ſpirit)* as it is immediately after, and always ought to be, the moſt ordinary underſtanding would have ſeen, that it is not a divine perſon, another God, here intended, but the divine power, or ſpirit of God, which was imparted to the apoſtles. The apoſtle Peter's words impart only this, that the attempting to deceive perſons inſpired with the holy ſpirit, was not barely an attempt to deceive them, but God himſelf, who had given them ſuch extraordinary powers. The famous Athanaſius himſelf (ſee Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 44.) gives here the following interpretation. 'He that lied to the holy ſpirit, lied to 'God,

Acts. 'God, who dwelled in man by his ſpirit. 'For where the ſpirit of God is, there is 'God himſelf. *For hereby*, ſaith the 'apoſtle, *we know that God dwelleth in us, 'becauſe he hath given us of his ſpirit.*' Thoſe therefore who find *a ſin againſt the third perſon in the* HOLY TRINITY here, muſt bring the ſame along with them from their own invention: for the apoſtle Peter aſſuredly knew nothing about ſuch a perſon, one among three.

Acts v. 29, &c. *Then Peter, and the other apoſtles, anſwered and ſaid* to the rulers of the country, before whom they were again convened, for preaching in the name of Jeſus: *we ought to obey God rather than man. The God of our fathers raiſed up Jeſus, whom ye ſlew, and hanged on a tree: Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a leader and a ſaviour, to give repentance to Iſrael and forgiveneſs of ſins. And we are his witneſſes of theſe things; ſo is alſo the holy ghoſt* (rather *holy ſpirit*) *whom God hath given to them that obey him.* It appears here, that Peter and all the apoſtles acknowleged, when chriſtians, the ſame God, as when they were jews; the ſame with their unbelieving rulers before whom they now ſtood; the the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the God of

Acts. their fathers. If any therefore acknowlege any other perſons as Gods, or more perſons than one, they worſhip a different God from the apoſtles.

Peter alſo, ſpeaking in the name of them all, deſcribes Jeſus to their rulers as a man in all reſpects, one of their own nation, who had been unrighteouſly put to an infamous death by them; but whom God had ſpeedily raiſed to life, and diſtinguiſhed with extraordinary favour, in making him his inſtrument in bringing men to virtue and eternal life.

You obſerve here again an entire confutation of the heathen polytheiſtic doctrine, firſt brought in by Juſtin Martyr, and retailed by a great part of chriſtian writers and commentators ſince, as will be ſhewn hereafter; which made Chriſt, a divine Perſon, who ſpoke to Moſes, and who ſtiled himſelf, *the God of their fathers*. But the apoſtles make them as different as a favoured human creature can be from its infinite creator.

v. 42. *And daily in the temple, and in every houſe, they ceaſed not to teach and to preach Jeſus Chriſt*, or as Biſhop Pearce puts it, *that Jeſus is the Chriſt*. Their doctrine concerning Jeſus was, that he was the

Acts. the great prophet, teacher and ſaviour, whom God had promiſed to raiſe up among them, the Chriſt. This was what they thought neceſſary to inſiſt upon concerning him. If any higher title or dignity had belonged to Jeſus, they would ſurely have told it.

Acts vii. 59. 60. *And they ſtoned Stephen, calling upon Jeſus in theſe* (*t*) *words, Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge.* Stephen in his free ſpeech juſt before, which had given great offence, had ſtiled Jeſus, ver. 37, refering to Deut. xviii. 15. 18. *a prophet like unto Moſes, one of* THEIR *brethren*, alſo ver. 52. *that juſt man*; and at the moment they ruſhed on him to drag him away to ſtone him, he had called Jeſus, *the ſon of man*, declaring that he then beheld him in a viſion, at the right hand of God.

You muſt judge for yourſelves, whether it was poſſible for Stephen to invoke one, whom at the very inſtant he ſtiled *the ſon of man* ſtanding at the right hand of God, either as that God at whoſe

(*t*) Ainſi fut lapidé Etienne, et cependant il invoquoit Jeſus en ces termes, Seigneur Jeſus, recevez mon eſprit. So L'Enfant tranſlates ver. 59.

Acts. right hand he ſtood; or as being another God, equal to him: Or, whether his application to Jeſus, at this time, was not owing to the impreſſion of the viſion he had been favoured with, a few minutes before, in which he had ſeen Jeſus preſent to him, and as ſuch deſired his protection, without conceiving him to be any other than a human creature extraordinarily favoured by the Almighty. This being done, after ſome interval more or leſs, his mind being leſs agitated, and more recollected, to let his murderers ſee with what diſpoſitions towards them he went out of the world, he kneeled down, it is ſaid (*u*), and prayed aloud for the divine forgiveneſs of them; therein ſhewing the

(*u*) Some may be pleaſed to obſerve, that it was ſo underſtood, as a prayer to God and not to Chriſt, by the very early, reſpectable author, whoever he was, of the epiſtle to the churches of Vienne and Lyons in France, in his relation of the ſufferers there for the goſpel, commending their pious and humane diſpoſitions, he ſays; 'They prayed for thoſe 'who grievouſly treated them, as did Stephen, the perfect 'martyr; *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge!* They did 'not proudly glory over thoſe that fell: i. e. who through 'the violence of the perſecution denied Chriſt. On ſuch of 'them as were indigent, they beſtowed thoſe good things 'with which they themſelves abounded: having bowels of 'compaſſion, they poured out many tears for them to the 'FATHER.'

Acts. the like temper, if he did not copy the example of his maſter Jeſus, who ſo far from being God, did himſelf offer a ſimilar prayer to God, at the moment of his death, Luke xxiii. 34. *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* I would further obſerve, that the ſacred hiſtorian, St. Luke, would have put Stephen's two invocations, the firſt, of Jeſus, the ſecond, of God, more diſtinct and apart, if he had entertained any ſuſpicion, that chriſtians could ever have fallen into the deplorable error of making his divine maſter, the ſon of man, Jeſus of Nazareth, the moſt high and eternal God.

Acts viii. *And who ſhall declare his generation?* 33. Some ſuppoſe, that from this paſſage in Iſaiah liii. Philip taught the eunuch, that Chriſt was the eternal ſon of God. Biſhop Lowth however renders the paſſage, *And the manner of his life, who would declare?* very juſtly rejecting the uſual rendering and ſuppoſed ſenſe of the words, which it had been cuſtomary to produce as a proof of Chriſt's preexiſtence, from the times of Juſtin Martyr to our own. But the right tranſlation of them is, *And the men of his gene-*

ration

ration who will be able to deſcribe? See Commentaries and Eſſays. Vol. I. p. 44. 45 (*x*).

Acts ix. 5. *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* Our Lord, in his higheſt exaltation, tells Paul, that he is the man that went by the name of Jeſus, i. e. who a few years before was born, and had his abode on this earth. But the chriſtian world hath been almoſt from the firſt aſhamed of him in that character. It is to be hoped that many are now returning

(*x*) Iſai. liii. 8. *Et generationem ejus quis enarrabit.*] Quiſquis attento animo ea quæ hic precedunt et ſequuntur, reſpexerit, videbit hæc verba intelligenda eſſe de ſumma impietate generationis iſtius, in qua vixit Chriſtus, et quorum conatibus in crucem actus eſt. Hoc tamen non obſtante, Patres fere omnes ab initio ſententiam Hieronymi amplexi ſunt: cujus hæc ſunt verba: 'Dupliciter hoc intelligitur, aut enim de divinitate ejus accipiendum eſt, quod impoſſibile ſit divinæ nativitatis noſſe myſteria; aut de partu virginis, quod difficulter poſſit exponi. i. e. Whoever attentively conſiders the connection of the paſſage, will ſee that theſe words are ſpoken concerning the great impiety of *that generation of men* in which Chriſt lived, and by whom he was crucified. Nevertheleſs almoſt all the fathers from the beginning have embraced Jerom's interpretation, who ſays; "The words are taken in a twofold ſenſe: for "they are to be underſtood, either as ſpeaking of his divi"nity, that it is impoſſible to comprehend the myſteries of "his divine generation; or of his miraculous conception of "a virgin, that it can very difficultly be explained.' Whitby, Strictura Patrum, p. 104.

ing to thoſe juſt ſentiments of him, which he would have them to entertain.

Acts ix. 14. 21. *And here he hath authority from the chief prieſts, to bind all that* call on thy name. *Is not this he which deſtroyed them, which* called on this name *in Jeruſalem?* It is evident, that the followers of Chriſt, are thoſe that are here ſpoken of. But it will be plain to every one, that St. Luke could not intend to define them as a claſs of men, who were diſtinguiſhed by the circumſtance of praying to Chriſt, which the words convey in our engliſh tranſlation; becauſe, neither in his hiſtory of Chriſt, which we call his goſpel, nor in this his ſecond treatiſe, *The Acts*, does he ever once denominate Chriſt, God, or the object of prayer, or any thing approaching to it: but on the contrary, both in this and in his former work, he deſcribes the Lord Jeſus as a human being, a creature, and moſt devout worſhipper of God himſelf, and expreſsly directing his followers to addreſs their prayers to the Father only, the Father equally of them and of himſelf: neither does he ever give any inſtance of men worſhipping Chriſt as God, or praying to him. The words therefore muſt be wrongly tranſlated in this place. And

it

Acts. it has been ſhewn, (*w*) that it is agreeable to the uſage of the greek language to render the phraſe, επικαλεμενους το ονομα σου, thoſe that (*x*) *are called by thy name*; which ſhould therefore be adopted, and not thoſe *that call upon thy name*. And this exactly ſuits the deſign of St. Luke. For in the beginning of his account of this extraordinary tranſaction, *ver.* 2. he remarks, that Saul's orders were, *if he found any of this way, to ſend them bound to Jeruſalem: Any of this way* anſwers to any *called by this name*, i. e. chriſtians.

If this ſhould ſeem to be an harſh, though it is not an unuſual conſtruction of the language, there is another, mentioned by

(*w*) See a Diſſertation on praying to Chriſt. p. 96. 97.

(*x*) Dr. Hammond interprets 1 Cor. i. 2. not, thoſe that in every place *call upon the name* of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, but all that in every place *are called by the name* of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; underſtanding it as a deſcription of Chriſtians; and ſays that the ſame phraſe, Acts ix. 14. is to be interpreted in the ſame manner. It is a like periphraſis, or deſcription of chriſtians, which is uſed in the following places, Rom. xv. 20. I ſtrived to preach the goſpel, *where Chriſt was not named*; i. e. where there were no chriſtians. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Let *every one that nameth the name of Chriſt*, depart from iniquity, *i. e.* every chriſtian. James ii. 7. *Do not they blaſpheme that worthy name, by which ye are called?*

Acts. by a (*y*) learned, ingenious perſon, as ſuggeſted by a friend, againſt which there can lye no objections, and which amounts to the ſame, by adopting another well-known ſenſe of the ſame phraſe, and a ſenſe in which it is uſed ſeveral times by (*z*) St. Luke in this book. And this is, that it ſhould ſignify thoſe that *appeal to thy name*, i. e. acknowlege thine authority, call themſelves chriſtians; whom it was the ſacred hiſtorian's deſign to deſcribe in ſuch a general way. It may be hoped then, that this paſſage of ſcripture will never be produced again, as encouraging prayer to Chriſt.

ix. 20. *And ſtraightway he preached Chriſt in the ſynagogues, that he is the Son of God.* "Rather" *preached the Chriſt in the ſynagogues, that this man* (*viz.* Jeſus) *is the Son of God.* The expreſſions, *the Chriſt and the Son of God* are equivalent, ver. 22. See Matthew xxiv. 63. and Mark xiv. 61. and comm.

(*y*) See 'Obſervations on the firſt part of Dr. Knowles's teſtimonies from the writers of the firſt four centuries.' By Capel Lofft, Eſq. p. 25.

(*z*) Καισαρα επικαλουμαι, I appeal to Cæſar. Acts xxv. ii. See alſo ver. 12. 25. xxvi. 32. xxviii. 19.

Acts. comm. on Acts viii. 37." (*a*) This is Bp. Pearce's note and a very juſt amendment of our engliſh tranſlation. What now muſt be ſaid of thoſe who maintain, *at this day*, that when Paul preached Chriſt in the ſynagogue, that he is the Son of God, he aſſerted him to be ſo by *eternal* generation?

ix. 22. *But Saul increaſed the more in ſtrength, and confounded the jews which dwelt at Damaſcus, proving that this is very Chriſt.* "Rather, *that this man* (Jeſus) *is the Chriſt.*" This is the ſame learned Biſhop's note, and neceſſary amendment of our tranſlation.

— 34. *And Peter ſaid unto him, Eneas, Jeſus Chriſt maketh thee whole*, or rather, *Jeſus who is the Chriſt*, Ιησους ο Χριστος, *maketh thee whole.* The apoſtle might expreſs himſelf in this brief familiar manner, to this perſon, as he appears to have been already a believer, being mentioned ver. 32. as one of the *ſaints*, i. e. chriſtians, that dwelt

(*a*) In the reference which the Biſhop makes to Acts viii. 37. it is in our preſent tranſlation, *And he anſwered and ſaid. I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*; which this judicious perſon ſays, ſhould rather be rendered, *that Jeſus the Chriſt is the Son of God*; yet at the ſame time ſhews in a note, that it is probable, the word, Chriſt, has been put in by ſome tranſcriber by miſtake, and that St. Luke's words were, *I believe that Jeſus is the Son of God.*

Acts. dwelt at Lydda; and perſons under paralytic affections have often their underſtandings not at all enfeebled. It is only however a different way of declaring what was done in the caſe of the lame man at the temple-gate, Acts iii. 6. 16. And therefore Pyle's paraphraſe of the place is very proper. 'As ſoon as he came to him, Peter, ſays 'he, called him by his name, and bid him 'in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, riſe up and 'be perfectly whole.'

Acts x. 34. 36. *Then Peter opened his mouth and ſaid; of a truth I perceive that God is no reſpecter of perſons: but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him; according to the meſſage which he ſent unto the children of Iſrael, preaching peace by Jeſus Chriſt, (he is Lord of all)*—The apoſtle acquaints this roman military officer, and his friends, who were all of them of the race of the gentiles, that he was now convinced that God, the common parent of mankind, did not confine his favour to jews, to one nation only; but that in every nation, the pious and virtuouſly diſpoſed, would be equally objects of his favour, and that this was the purport of the meſſage delivered from God by Jeſus Chriſt, whom, though a perſon of

no

Acts. no great worldly account, and unjuſtly put to an ignominious death, he had appointed the lord or head of all mankind, gentiles as well as jews. He then goes on to tell them, that they could not be ſtrangers to the late extraordinary tranſaction in the country of the jews, where they themſelves had reſided; *viz.*

x. 38. *How God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth, with the holy ſpirit, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil: for God was with him.*

The centurion Cornelius, and his company, are here informed, that our Lord was a man of the town of Nazareth in Judea, who had been diſtinguiſhed from other men by extraordinary divine powers, which enabled him to do many miraculous cures, and to heal ſome of the moſt inveterate diſeaſes, vulgarly aſcribed to an evil ſpirit; by which he gave full proof of his miſſion from God. So that theſe firſt heathen converts are here taught; that God is the compaſſionate father of the whole human race; that Jeſus was a man of the jewiſh nation, in a moſt extraordinary manner gifted and qualified by him to ſerve his benevolent purpoſes; and that the holy ghoſt,

Acts. ghoſt, or holy ſpirit, was nothing but God's extraordinary power, imparted to Chriſt: that very ſame power, which Peter immediately after mentions to have been imparted, ver. 43. 44. in an inferior degree, to this roman officer, and his attendants, who were all pious perſons, and became convinced of the truth of the goſpel, upon this occaſion.

Acts xiii. *Of this man* (David's) *ſeed, hath God, according to his promiſe, raiſed unto Iſrael a Saviour, Jeſus.* This whole diſcourſe at Antioch is much to be remarked and attended to. It was the firſt that was made by Paul and Barnabas, when ſent out by the college of the apoſtles to preach the goſpel to the gentiles. The audience was compoſed of jews and gentiles. From Paul's ſpeech to them, they would learn, that there was but one ſingle perſon, who was the God and governor of the world, and who had been the God of the jewiſh people and peculiarly favourable to them: and that Jeſus Chriſt, was a man of that nation, of the family of their king David, brought into being, and qualified in an extraordinary manner by the Almighty to ſerve his gracious purpoſes for all mankind, gentiles as well as jews: to whom he had given the fulleſt atteſtation, that

Acts. he was a divine meſſenger and teacher, in raiſing him to life in a ſhort time, after he had been unrighteouſly put to death by the rulers of their country. If there had been any other God, beſides the God of Iſrael; or if Jeſus had been any other than a human creature, inveſted with high powers from that God, Paul and Barnabas cannot be ſuppoſed to have been ſo negligent and forgetful, as not to have told theſe jews and heathens of ſuch extraordinary things. But as they are quite ſilent on theſe ſubjects, it may certainly be concluded, that not only they themſelves, but the reſt of the apoſtles, who, by divine admonition had deputed them to this ſervice, knew nothing of them.

Acts xiv. 13. 15. *Then the prieſt of Jupiter, whoſe ſtatue was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done ſacrifice with the people. Which when the apoſtles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and ſaying, why do ye theſe things? We are mortal men like yourſelves, and preach unto you, that ye ſhould turn from theſe vanities, unto the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and all things that are therein.* St. Paul teaches theſe

Acts. theſe heathens, that there is but one perſon, who is God, and the creator of all things. This moſt aſſuredly excludes Jeſus Chriſt from being God or the creator; if the apoſtle Paul's opinion is to be of any weight. *When will the time come that chriſtians ſhall worſhip the one living God alone, whom Paul preached, without joining any other perſon of their own device, as god with him?*

xvi. 31. — 34. *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and believing in God* are only ſo far the ſame thing, as Jeſus Chriſt received his commiſſion and power from God.

xvii. 23. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them; and three ſabbath days diſcourſed with them out of the ſcriptures; opening and alleging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered, and have riſen from the dead; and that this Jeſus, whom I preach unto you, is the Chriſt.* We have here a ſample of St. Paul's manner of preaching the goſpel to the jews. He tells them that their antient prophets had foretold that the Meſſiah would be a ſuffering character, and that he ſhould be unrighteouſly put to death; nevertheleſs, that he would be highly diſtinguiſhed and owned by the Almighty, by being raiſed in a few days

Acts. xvii. to life again; and that Jeſus, whom he preached to them, anſwered thoſe characters. We are told nothing here of Chriſt being God, or the creator of the world, inferior or ſubordinate, which ſome chriſtians have fancied they found in the hebrew ſcriptures; but that he was a man of the jewiſh nation, who nobly ſuffered for the truth, and recommended himſelf by it to the favour of God.

24. 31. *God that made the world, and all things that are therein,—the lord of heaven and earth, hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by* the man *whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.* St. Paul here acquaints his Athenian audience, in the moſt expreſs terms, that the founder of our religion was one of the human race, that had been appointed to an important office and department under God, the ſovereign creator of all things; who had given the fulleſt atteſtation to the character and miſſion of this his divine meſſenger, by raiſing him ſpeedily to life after his unjuſt condemnation and death.

From the declaration of St. Paul to the heathens at Lyſtra and here to the Athenians,

Acts. xvii. nians, that there is but One God, in the ſtricteſt poſſible ſenſe of the terms: and that this God was the creator of all things; and alſo that Jeſus Chriſt was merely a human being, inveſted with an extraordinary commiſſion, and powers from God: it follows, that the language uſed by this apoſtle in his epiſtles, which ſeems to ſound quite the contrary, *viz.* Coloſſ. i. 16. (*a*) that *by Chriſt were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones*

(*a*) Col. i. 16. Si ex Epiſtola ad Epheſios interpretari debeamus quæ hic habentur, ut præſtantiſſimi interpretes conſentiunt, intelligenda hæc ſunt de nova creatione, ſive conſtitutione mundi—per adventum Chriſti, et prædicationem evangelii, Eph. i. 10, ii. 10—15. iii. 9. iv. 24.—porro hic et comm. 20. non dicit ο ουρανος και η γη εκτισθη, ſed τα εν ουρανοις και τα επι γης, quo habitatores ſignificantur, qui reconciliantur. Wetſtein.—*that is*;

'Col. i. 16. *For by him were all things created*, &c.) If, 'according to the opinion of the moſt judicious critics, this 'paſſage is to be interpreted in agreement with what is ad-'vanced in the epiſtle to the Epheſians, it is to be underſtood 'of the *new* creation or conſtitution of the world, by the com-'ing of Chriſt and the preaching of the goſpel. Eph. i. 10. 'ii. 10.—15. iii. 9. iv. 24.——Moreover here, and at the 20th 'verſe, he does not ſay, *heaven and earth were created*, but 'the *things* that are in heaven and on earth, by which are in-'tended the inhabitants, who are reconciled to God.'

Acts. *or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him:* that this language, I ſay, cannot be underſtood to mean the natural and original formation of things: for that St. Paul could not ſo glaringly contradict himſelf, in aſſigning ſuch creative powers to Chriſt, which he himſelf and the whole tenour of ſcripture aſcribed to the ſingle perſon of Jehovah. Something elſe therefore muſt have been intended by him. And it has accordingly been ſhewn, and will be found, that the word, to *create*, is uſed in different ſenſes by the ſacred writers; and, that the creation intended by St. Paul, in this epiſtle to the Coloſſians, is the great change and renewal of things, in the moral ſtate of the world, brought about by the goſpel of Chriſt.

xviii. 13. *This fellow perſuadeth men to worſhip contrary to the law.* It is moſt probable, and has been the ſentiment of judicious chriſtians, that this is only a general malicious accuſation thrown out againſt Paul by his countrymen, as if he was not to be claſſed among them, of their religion, who enjoyed peculiar privileges from the roman emperors; but that he was a man that introduced a new religion, and therefore

Acts. fore was not to be tolerated as belonging to them. This however would not have deſerved notice by me on this occaſion, if ſome perſons had not lately ſuppoſed and maintained, that Paul was accuſed here of teaching the adoration of Chriſt, as God. Men may *ſuppoſe* what they pleaſe: but there is no proof that Paul ever taught, or that his countrymen accuſed him of any thing of the ſort. His doctrine was uniformly the reverſe: that Jeſus was a perſon of his own nation, highly favoured and diſtinguiſhed by Almighty God, the ſole creator of all things, and only object of the devout worſhip of his creatures.

xviii. 28. *For he mightily convinced the jews, and that publicly, ſhewing by the ſcriptures, that Jeſus was the Chriſt.* You learn here, that this eloquent and learned man, Apollos, after *that the way of God*, i. e. the doctrine of the goſpel, *had been expounded to him more perfectly*, did not teach his countrymen that Jeſus was Almighty God, or any thing above the condition of a man; but that he was a perſon honoured by him in an extraordinary manner, as his great prophet and meſſenger; *viz.* the Chriſt.

Acts. *Take heed therefore to feed the church of*
xx. 28. *God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.* It ſhould rather be, *to feed the church* of the Lord, *i. e.* of Jeſus. For ſo it is written in the beſt and moſt antient copies, and cited by early chriſtian authors.

xxii. 8. *And I anſwered, who art thou, Lord? And he ſaid unto me, I am Jeſus of Nazareth, whom thou perſecuteſt.* Our Lord here again, as we have before had occaſion to obſerve, does not forget his original humble condition upon earth, after his being taken up to the heavenly manſions; but owns himſelf to be the man that went by the name of Jeſus of Nazareth, becauſe of his long abode in that obſcure place.

— 14. *And he ſaid, the God of our fathers hath choſen thee, that thou ſhouldeſt know his will, and ſee that juſt one,* rather *(that juſt man).* This pious jew, who here ſpeaks, a diſciple of Chriſt, of how long ſtanding we know not, is choſen by our Lord, to be an inſtrument in bringing Paul acquainted with the doctrine and evidences of his religion, and finiſhing his converſion to it, which himſelf had begun by appearing and ſpeaking to him from heaven. And Ananias, who could not but know who Chriſt

was,

Acts. was, gives him only the title of that *juſt man:* a title moſt glorious and honourable indeed, as any that could belong to a creature, but ſuch as, without contradiction, marks him out to belong to the human ſpecies.

It is alſo much to be obſerved, that although Paul ſpeaks with gratitude, as became him (*b*), of the favour done him by Chriſt, in chuſing him to be an apoſtle: yet we are here taught, that it was a choice, in which Chriſt did not merely act of himſelf, but under the direction of Almighty God; to whom therefore ultimately and chiefly all thanks were due. *The God of our fathers, hath choſen thee,* and *ſo on.* And indeed Paul himſelf, though always ſenſible of the goodneſs of Chriſt to him, is not backward or unmindful in acknowleging, from whom that goodneſs originally came. *But when it pleaſed* GOD (ſays he to the Galatians i. 15.) *who ſeparated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his favour, to reveal his ſon in me, that I might preach him among the heathens,* &c. See Rom. i. 1. Eph. iii. 7. 8.

— 16. *And now why tarrieſt thou? ariſe, and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, calling on*

(*b*) *And I thank Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the miniſtry.*

Acts. *on the name of the Lord.* Grotius remarks, that the Lord here invoked, is not Christ, but God, the Father; and he thinks that there is a reference to the practice of the first christians in praying over those that were newly baptised; when, as Justin Martyr mentions, their prayers were addressed only (*c*) to the Father, and sovereign God of the universe. How far this may be intended in the passage, you will judge. Assuredly the sacred historian cannot be supposed to speak of invoking Christ, as he is never mentioned by him throughout this book, in any degree, as the object of worship, but as being himself the servant of the Almighty.

But

(*c*) επονομαζεται τω ελομενω αναγεννηθηναι, και μετανοησαντι επι τοις ημαρτημενοις, το τȣ πατρος των ολων και δεσποτȣ Θεȣ ονομα·—και επ' ονοματος δε Ιησȣ Χριστȣ τȣ σταυρωθεντος επι Ποντιȣ Πιλατȣ, και επ' ονοματος πνευματος αγιȣ, ο δια των προφητων προεκηρυξε τα κατα τον Ιησȣν παντα, ο φωτιζομενος λȣεται. Justin Martyr. Apol. 1. p. 80. *i. e.* 'The name of the Father of the universe and sovereign 'God is invoked for the person who desires to be baptized, 'and hath repented of his past sins:——and he is baptized 'in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified by Pontius 'Pilate, and in the name of the holy spirit, who foretold by 'the prophets the things concerning Jesus.' N. B. Justin always distinguishes in a proper manner, the God and Father of the universe from Christ and all other beings, notwithstanding the grievous errors which he fell into and gave occasion to, will be seen shortly.

Acts. But perhaps, the term, *Lord*, here, rather refers ſo Chriſt, and the phraſe επικαλεσαμενος το ονομα τε Κυριε, ſhould be conſtrued as in Acts ix. 14.—21. *acknowleging the name of the Lord*, i. e. of making open profeſſion of Chriſt's religion. See L'Enfant's note upon the place, and Dr. Hammond's paraphraſe of it.

xxiv. 14. *But this I confeſs unto thee, that after the way that they call hereſy, ſo worſhip I the God of my fathers.* St. Paul, here, in his defence before Felix the roman governor, declares that he worſhiped the ſame God now that he was a chriſtian, as when a jew, before his converſion. This demonſtrates that the apoſtle knew nothing of Jeſus or any other perſon being God, but the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the God of his fathers.

xxv. 18. *Againſt whom, when the accuſers ſtood up,*
19. *they brought none accuſation of ſuch things as I ſuppoſed; but had certain queſtions againſt him of their own ſuperſtition, and of one Jeſus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.* This is produced merely to point out the general perſuaſion, that prevailed in the country; *viz.* that our Saviour was commonly ſpoken of, and taken to be originally, one of the human race, and not a being of a higher order.

Having

Acts xxvi. 22. 23. *Having obtained therefore help of God, I continue unto this day, witneſſing both to ſmall and great, ſaying none other things than thoſe, which the prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come; that the Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, and that he ſhould be the firſt that ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhould ſhew light unto the people and unto the gentiles.* Paul here declares his ſentiments, before king Agrippa, a jew, to be in intire agreement with thoſe of their jewiſh prophets, concerning their Meſſiah; who was alſo foretold by them to be of a particular tribe and family of their nation,—that he was one that was to undergo a violent death, but would ſpeedily be raiſed again to life, and become the inſtrument of bringing both jews and heathens to eternal life.

(*d*) It would be hardly worth the while to mention, had not ſome lately much inſiſted on it; that the language uſed here, and in ſome few other places, where Chriſt is ſaid *to riſe*, or *to have riſen* from the dead, has been imagined to imply, that he raiſed himſelf to life; and that this is a proof of his divinity. But it being too great an undertaking, for one *dead*, i. e. *without*

(*d*) N. B. The general, and almoſt univerſal ſtile of the ſacred writers, is, that God raiſed Chriſt from the dead.

Acts. *without life*, to act; theſe perſons have therefore had recourſe to the chimerical notion of Chriſt being poſſeſſed of two natures or capacities, (for this laſt is the term lately adopted,) a human capacity and a divine capacity, and that the divine capacity raiſed to life the dead human capacity. But they did not conſider that the ſame language is uſed concerning other dead human creatures as well as Chriſt. For we read 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. *The Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the* dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe *firſt*. So that according to this method of argument, the pious dead have now a power of raiſing themſelves to life as well as Chriſt had, and therefore muſt be ſuppoſed to be poſſeſſed like him of a divine nature or capacity, by which at a proper time, they will raiſe to life their dead human nature or capacity. When will divines have done with theſe ſolutions of difficulties of their own making, ſpun out of the brains of philoſophers more ſubtle than wiſe?

SECTION

SECTION IX.

Of the ſum of St. Luke's teſtimony concerning God and Chriſt, in his hiſtory, called THE ACTS.

From a copious enumeration of facts, we have found, that what St. Luke advances in this his ſecond treatiſe, *The Acts*, is in exact conformity with what he had related of Jeſus Chriſt, in his goſpel; that he was intirely one of the human race, and nothing more or different from others, except in the divine communications made to him. Our hiſtorian calls Mary, his mother, and other perſons of his kindred, after his reſurrection. And he introduces Jeſus, after his exaltation into heaven, declaring himſelf to have been once one of mankind, not bluſhing to own his earthly origin, which ſo many of his followers are diſguſted with, and offended to hear him called a human being only. St. Luke ſpeaks of no perſons as being properly divine, or God, or to be worſhiped, but the ſingle perſon of the ſovereign Lord and creator of all things; and holds forth Jeſus as his ſervant, brought into being by him, to promote his benevolent purpoſes for all mankind. And in the courſe of his hiſtory, which appears to have been written to give an account of the propagation of the

the goſpel in the world after Chriſt's reſurrection, the like ſentiments of the apoſtles concerning theſe points are naturally interwoven.

This laſt is a circumſtance of great weight, which has not been duly attended to by chriſtians. Indeed from the memoirs of Chriſt, left us by the four evangeliſts, which pronounce ſo abſolutely, and without reſerve, as we have ſeen, that Jeſus was the great expected prophet of the jewiſh nation, of a particular tribe and family, with extraordinary power from God, and nothing more; it might have been preſumed, and taken for granted, that all the apoſtles entertained the ſame ſentiments of their divine maſter. But it is a ſatisfaction to have that additional diſtinct evidence of the fact, which St. Luke gives us. I conceive it will be uſeful to give at once an abridged view of it, with the inferences almoſt intuitively deducible from it; though I may touch upon ſome few things obſerved above.

SECTION X.

Of the ſentiments of the apoſtles, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as recorded by St. Luke in The Acts.

You will recollect, that ſoon after the beginning of his hiſtory, St. Luke records a diſcourſe, wherein

wherein Peter profeſſedly ſpeaks in the name of all the apoſtles, and in which God is diſtinguiſhed, as he ever muſt be, as the ſupreme author and governor of all things, and the holy Jeſus is characterized as his dependent but highly favoured creature of the human race, in terms that cannot be miſconſtrued. *Ye men of Iſrael, hear theſe words! Jeſus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of you, as ye yourſelves alſo know: Him, whom by wicked hands ye have crucified and ſlain, hath God raiſed up.* Acts ii. 22.—37.

Alſo Acts ii. iii. When Peter and John by a word's ſpeaking, had healed a man who had been a cripple from his birth; they informed their wondering countrymen, that the miracle was wrought by a power which they derived from Jeſus, who was a man of their own nation and country, and the highly favoured ſervant of God, the God of their fathers. And they twice ſtile him God's SERVANT.

COROLLARIES,

deducible from the foregoing facts.

I.

Here is an additional proof, (ſee p. 25, &c.) that the apoſtle John does not, in the preface to his goſpel,

goſpel call Chriſt, God, or a preexiſtent being, ſince he with the reſt of the apoſtles, in this ſpeech of Peter's, acknowleges and declares him to have been a human being only.

Neither could John contradict himſelf, and aſſert any thing of the kind in his epiſtles, as indeed he does not; though ſome have vainly imagined and argued for it, but have often been confuted.

And if we had not otherwiſe the fulleſt evidence, that the text of the three witneſſes, 1 John v. 7. is ſpurious; we ſhould hence nevertheleſs be authoriſed to reject it, if it intended to teach Chriſt to be any other than a human creature, indued with divine powers.

II.

We have one epiſtle preſerved of the apoſtle James's writing, admirably ſuited to correct the faults of the chriſtians and his countrymen to whom he dedicates it; and at the ſame time breathing a ſpirit of ſublime piety, and concern for their virtue and true happineſs, peculiar to the ſacred writers. Throughout he ſpeaks of God and of Chriſt, as might be expected from a jew and an apoſtle. I have ſomewhere read, that Bugenhagius, one of the german reformers, was ſo ſtruck with thoſe words of St. James, ii. 19. *Thou believeſt that there is one God: thou doſt well:* that

that he ſaid, the apoſtle ſpoke like an Ebionite *(e)*. But he alſo might with truth, and the fulleſt evidence, have ſaid, that all the apoſtles ſpake like Ebionites, Nazarenes, or might have given them any other antient name, which would have marked their belief, that there was but one perſon who was *God, even the Father*, as this apoſtle remarks, iii. 9. and that Jeſus was the creature and honoured ſervant of that God, and his extraordinary meſſenger to mankind.

III.

The apoſtle Peter, after ſuch declarations, in his own name, and in that of the other eleven apoſtles, that there was but one ſingle perſon who was God, and that Jeſus was his favoured ſervant, and altogether one of the human race, could not poſſibly contradict himſelf, and teach another doctrine in his epiſtles. Nothing indeed could be farther from his thoughts and deſign, as will appear

(e) Ebionites and *Nazarenes*, were two names for the ſame perſons, *viz. jewiſh* chriſtians, who held the divine unity in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, and believed our Saviour to have been a man, of their own nation, their expected great prophet. The ſcripture-authorities exhibited in this work ſhew, that thoſe who followed the doctrine of Jeſus and his apoſtles, could not entertain any other ſentiments. And Dr. Prieſtley has evinced this to have been the real fact, from ſufficient hiſtorical evidence, in his controverſy with Dr. now Bp. Horſley.

pear to every one, who impartially examines thoſe writings. So that did not we know the power of prejudice, we might wonder how a learned man could fall into ſo grievous an error, as to impute to this apoſtle, a moſt ſtrange polytheiſtic doctrine, expreſsly diſavowed by him. But you, whoſe judgments are more unbiaſſed, will eaſily ſee how inconſiderate and negligent an interpreter of ſcripture, the preſent Biſhop of Worceſter (Dr. Hurd) ſhews himſelf in this inſtance, and what an injuſtice he does to the apoſtle, though without intending it. " The ſubſtance of what ' we are to believe,' ſays the Biſhop, ' on this ' whole ſubject, is contained in a ſingle text of St. ' Peter, where *The Three Divine Perſons, yet inef-* ' *fably one God, the Trinity in Unity, whom we* ' *adore, and their reſpective offices, are accurately* ' *diſtinguiſhed.* For in the opening of his firſt ' epiſtle, he pronounces the chriſtians to whom he ' writes, *elect*, that is entitled to ſalvation, *accord-* ' *ing to the foreknowlege* and predetermination *of* ' *God the Father, through the ſanctification of the* ' *ſpirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of* ' *Jeſus Chriſt.*' Biſhop Hurd's Sermons. Vol. ii. p. 311, &c. *(f)*.

(f) You will ſee in the very next verſe, that the Divine Being is called *the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, *viz.* the perſon to whom he owed his exiſtence and all it's bleſſings

IV.

We have a very ſhort epiſtle of St. Jude, who was one of our Lord's kindred; in which there is nothing different from what he, and the other apoſtles declared by the mouth of Peter, concerning their divine maſter. He has one paſſage indeed, which ſome have ignorantly miſrepreſented; wherein, ſpeaking of certain falſe teachers of his time, St. Jude accuſes them of denying *God, the only* (g) *ſovereign,* δεσπότην, *and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And he probably alludes to thoſe early corrupters of the goſpel by a miſtaken philoſophy, who would not allow Jeſus to be the Son of the creator of the world, which they maintained to have been made by an inferior leſs perfect being; but that Jeſus was ſent by the ſupreme God, who was perfectly good, to rectify the errors of the creator. Into ſuch miſtakes do men fall, when they leave the written

bleſſings; and he is alſo in the ſame place ſaid to have raiſed Jeſus Chriſt from the dead: which aſſuredly beſpeaks Jeſus to have been a mortal creature: for God cannot die. To have overlooked this, and many other ſimilar but ſtronger paſſages of the like ſort, in the epiſtles of this eminent diſciple of Chriſt, muſt have been blameable in one who can ſo peremptorily declare him to be the teacher of a Trinity in Unity.—This is repeated by me here to guard you againſt being miſled by ſuch authorities.

(g) Dr. Doddridge gives the ſame turn to the tranſlation, in his paraphraſe.

written word to follow their own imaginations and prejudices.

V.

Of the other apoſtles, who were with our Lord in his life time, and who now joined with Peter in this prayer, we have nothing remaining in writing; but we are aſſured, from ſatisfactory evidence, as well as from what the apoſtle Peter here declares concerning their ſentiments, that wherever they went, they would bear teſtimony to that grand truth of revelation, that there was but one only true God, the God of their fathers; and that Jeſus was a man of their own nation, and the highly favoured ſervant and meſſenger of that God, and the teacher of his will to men.

SECTION XI.

St. Luke's record of the manner in which the goſpel was firſt preached to the heathen world.

Acts x. You are informed at large, of Peter being expreſsly commiſſioned by Almighty God, to bring a man of rank, one of the heathen world, to the knowlege of the goſpel. Now in carrying on his converſion, what does the apoſtle teach him? that Jeſus Chriſt was God? or, the holy ſpirit, God? No ſuch thing. But that Jeſus was a man of Nazareth in Judea; and the holy ghoſt

or holy ſpirit, was the gift of divine powers, which God beſtowed upon him, to qualify him to teach his will with authority to mankind; and that though he was cut off by violent and wicked inſtruments for his many virtues and zeal in the diſcharge of his great office, the Almighty had vindicated his innocence, and ſhewn his high eſtimation of him by appointing him to be the preſident and judge at that future day, when all thoſe who ſhould be found alive, and the innumerable dead, were to be called to give account of themſelves.

After this opening made; Acts xiii. xiv. &c. Paul and Barnabas are, by divine appointment, ſent forth by the reſt of the apoſtles, to preach the goſpel to the whole heathen world. And in their travels, for this great deſign, into different countries; they firſt acquaint them, every where, with the holy life of Jeſus, a man of their own nation; his appointment from God to teach his will to the world; and his unjuſt death in the cauſe of the truth he delivered: but whom God claimed and confirmed to be his approved ſervant and meſſenger to mankind, by reſtoring him to life in three days. And Paul expreſsly informs his Athenian audience, that *the God, that made the world,* had recently manifeſted his will and holy laws *by the man, viz.* Jeſus Chriſt; whom he had dignified, by appointing him to paſs ſentence upon mankind, at a future day, according to their actions, good or evil.

COROL-

COROLLARIES,
deducible from the foregoing facts.

I.

Whoever teaches that there is any perſon who is God, but the God of Iſrael, the living God, the God that made the world; or that Jeſus Chriſt is any other than a human being, the highly favoured ſervant of God, teaches a doctrine contrary to that of the apoſtles, and condemned by them.

II.

St. Paul holds forth the ſame doctrine concerning God and Chriſt in his epiſtles, which he preached to the Athenians. And it is pointed out in this work, and has been proved by others, that his words concerning a *new creation* by Jeſus Chriſt, and in all other places, are miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented, where any would fix a contrary meaning on them, *viz.* that there is any God, or creator but the ſingle perſon of the Father of the univerſe; or that Jeſus Chriſt is God, or any other originally than one of the human race.

III.

It has been much diſputed among chriſtians of different perſuaſions and opinions, whether the

epiſtle, that goes under the name of Barnabas, was written by Paul's companion, or by ſome other of that name, or by ſome one perſonating Barnabas. I confeſs, I rather incline to think it not written by Paul's companion. But if there be any thing in it, that ſpeaks of Jeſus Chriſt as preexiſtent, or employed in creating the world, or as any other than a human being, it would be a proof that it could not be written by the true Barnabas, who taught a different doctrine in the ſcriptures, in preaching Chriſt to the heathens, as St. Luke aſſures us.

Some of the chriſtian writers, after the council of Nice, and others in our own times, who would have the holy Jeſus to be God as well as man, have been much perplexed, that the apoſtles in their ſermons to jews and gentiles, ſhould omit all mention of Chriſt as God; and particularly that Paul and Barnabas at Lyſtra, and that Paul again at Athens, ſhould ſpeak of him moſt deciſively as a man only, the creature of the living God, the creator of the world. And they have endeavoured to account for it by ſaying, that the apoſtles refrained from naming Chriſt as God, or teaching that there were Three Divine Perſons, each of them God, leſt they ſhould thereby confirm the heathens in their idolatry; and alſo by alleging, that it was neceſſary to uſe great caution towards their countrymen, the jews, becauſe that they would

not

not bear to be directly told, that their meſſiah, a mortal man, was the ſupreme God (*n*).

When men find no mention made in the ſcriptures, where naturally it was to be expected, of a doctrine, which they think fundamental and moſt important, it behoves them certainly to try to diſcover ſome reaſon, why the apoſtles ſhould take no notice of it. Others however, who do not think it right to *make* hiſtory, but to take it as they find it, will be inclined to think, that the apoſtles did not teach either jews or heathens, that Chriſt was God, becauſe they did not believe it, but held him to be a mortal creature only, highly favoured by God; and that with reſpect to a *Trinity of Divine Perſons*, each of them God, they appear not to have had the remoteſt idea of any ſuch thing.

Theſe perſons do not conſider, that it is a heavy reflection upon the goſpel, as fabricated by them, that when its divine teacher came to deſtroy idolatry, his own doctrine ſhould bear ſuch affinity to it, that it muſt be preached with caution and reſerve, for fear of encouraging heathens in the worſhip of their many gods.

It

(*n*) Much unlearned and unworthy contradiction and oppoſition hath been made to Dr. Prieſtley, in his controverſy with Bp. Horſley, on this ſubject, which has given him opportunity of throwing a pleaſing light upon it, to the ſatisfaction of all who love to ſee curious and important facts illuſtrated.

It is however but too true of the chriſtian doctrine, not as delivered by its divine author, but as his followers have corrupted, and new-modelled it, that it notoriouſly borders upon, and favours idolatry; and this is known to be the grand ſtumbling-block in the way of jews, mahometans; and deiſts, which prevents all examination of the chriſtian ſcriptures, becauſe they think, but very erroneouſly, that they teach this polytheiſtic doctrine.

SECTION XII.

The worſhip of the truly primitive church, made up of the apoſtles and their friends, as recorded by St. Luke in THE ACTS.

The Acts was one of the laſt written books of the New Teſtament, and carries down the ſtate of things in the chriſtian church, till within a few years of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. After which, there is a great chaſm, for forty years, in the hiſtory of our religion. One cannot therefore but reflect with peculiar ſatisfaction, that we have a pattern of divine worſhip, in which all the apoſtles joined, preſerved to us by St. Luke; becauſe this will be a model, to which we can conform with full ſatisfaction; and from a compariſon with it, we may be able to judge, how far our own devotions are directed

directed to their right object. It is contained in Acts iv. 23.—30. And the Great God is there addreſſed in the ſingular number, and with the pronoun *thou*, which abſolutely denotes one Perſon only, and excludes every other. It is recorded that *they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and ſaid, Sovereign lord,* THOU *art the God, who haſt made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and all that in them is!* And, in their prayer, they twice ſtile Jeſus, the *holy ſervant* of the God they worſhip.

COROLLARIES,
deducible from the foregoing account.

I.

The ſovereign lord of all, and God of the apoſtles, the God of chriſtians, is not compoſed of Three Perſons, but is One Perſon only.

II.

Jeſus Chriſt is not the God of chriſtians, but the *holy ſervant* of the God whom the apoſtles worſhiped, and whom alone all chriſtians are to worſhip.

III.

They, who, beſides this God, the ſovereign lord and creator of all things, worſhip two other Perſons,

Perſons, whom they call *God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt*, do not conform to the example of the apoſtles, nor worſhip the God whom they worſhiped.

IV.

All the jewiſh chriſtians were Unitarians. They could not poſſibly be different, who were taught by the apoſtles. And the accounts that remain of theſe firſt jewiſh chriſtians confirm this fact, as Dr. Prieſtley hath abundantly evinced againſt the unbecoming cavils of his opponents, Mr. Badcock and Biſhop Horſley.

V.

All the gentile chriſtians were at firſt Unitarians; for they received the goſpel from the apoſtles and other jewiſh chriſtians. And common unlearned chriſtians continued to be Unitarians, for ſeveral centuries. But the learned among them ſoon began to corrupt the true doctrine of the Scriptures concerning Jeſus Chriſt, by making him a perſon that preexiſted, and who was an inferior God, and employed by the father of the univerſe in making the world, before he became man; and at length, by converting him into the ſupreme God, as he is looked upon by

by many unto this day. How this fatal defection from the truth firſt began, is ſhewn in the following chapter of this work.

VI.

All chriſtians who would conform to the ſentiments, worſhip and practice of the apoſtles, muſt be unitarians: that is, they muſt pray to and worſhip the ſingle Perſon of Jehovah, the Father of the univerſe, the only true God; and conſider, reſpect and honour Jeſus Chriſt, as his holy ſervant, and meſſenger to mankind, once their fellow-mortal, but now worthily exalted, and appointed to be the future judge at that day, when the whole race of mankind ſhall have different allotments of happineſs or miſery, according as they have done good or evil in the world.

VII.

Some chriſtians, in former time, and lately, not finding that Chriſt was looked upon as any thing more than a man in his life-time, have taken upon them to ſay that his divinity began to be diſplayed at his reſurrection. But they are to be reminded, that the foregoing concluſions are drawn from the words and practice of his apoſtles, after his reſurrection and aſcenſion into heaven; and that their vain

vain imagination, for no better name can it deſerve, is confuted by our Lord's firſt act recorded, immediately on his being raiſed again to life; *viz.* the meſſage which he ſent to his deſponding diſciples, in which he declares himſelf a creature of the human race, and that he had the ſame God and kind author of his being, and all its bleſſings, in common with them: *Go to my brethren*, ſays he to Mary Magdalen, *and tell them; I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father; and unto my God, and your God.* John xx.

IT IS TO BE HOPED, that the demonſtration is now made fully compleat, and evident to every underſtanding: from the four ſacred hiſtorians of our Lords life, and from the hiſtory of the propagation of his religion after his death and reſurrection by St. Luke; THAT the apoſtles of Jeſus, did not know, or worſhip any other God, or teach that there was any other God to be worſhiped, but the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the ſupreme lord of all, the God of their fathers, the parent and ſole creator of all things;

THAT Jeſus Chriſt in his life-time, and after his aſcenſion into heaven, declared himſelf to be one of the human race:

THAT ALL his apoſtles bear teſtimony to him as being a man of their own nation, a divine prophet, whoſe exiſtence began when he was born of his mother Mary, a jeweſs:

And

AND THAT he was brought into being, and qualified in an extraordinary manner, to reform the world ſunk in vice and ignorance, and to teach them virtue, and the knowlege and worſhip of the one only living and true God, in oppoſition to prevailing idolatry, and to the worſhip of any other than the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the Father and ſole creator of all things.

Theſe ends have in a certain degree, been attained, through the preaching of the goſpel. For a large portion of the world hath been greatly enlightened and reformed by it, compared with their former heathen ſtate. And although chriſtians, in proceſs of time, corrupted their religion and fell into an idolatry ſimilar to that of their heathen anceſtors, and worſhiped Jeſus Chriſt as the eternal God, which ſtill continues among the greater part of them: this polytheiſm is manifeſtly wearing out in many chriſtian countries, particularly in our own; and is giving way to right ſentiments of the Divine Unity, and of the worſhip of the Father alone, which the bleſſed Jeſus recommended and practiſed. And if the many, who are convinced of this great truth, could be prevailed with to recommend it by their own example and practice, which is their duty, the whole world, in no long ſpace of time, would become Unitarians, worſhipers of the Father, the only true God.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

Of the ORIGIN *of the great errors concerning* Jeſus Chriſt.

SECTION I.

Of the firſt corruption of the true doctrine concerning Jeſus Chriſt, *in the time of the apoſtles.*

IT is painful to have cauſe to obſerve, that very ſtrange errors, reſpecting the perſon of Chriſt, took place even whilſt ſome of the apoſtles were alive: the effects of which remain to this hour.

For coeval with the very firſt preaching of the goſpel, there were learned and ſpeculative men that embraced it, who, out of a deſire of exalting the character of its founder, and through the prepoſſeſſions of a falſe philoſophy, and notions of impurity in whatſoever was connected with *matter*, would not allow our Saviour to have been a ſuffering

ſering mortal creature, like themſelves; but contended that he was man only in appearance (*a*): and as to the aſſertions of his apoſtles to the contrary, who were unlearned men, and not acquainted with ſcience, they ſeem not to have regarded their teſtimony in this reſpect, though they paid a deference to it in others. That this was the light in which theſe men conſidered the apoſtles, may be gathered from what St. John ſays of them in his epiſtles; where we find, that they ſtill

(*a*) It is againſt theſe philoſophical corrupters of the true doctrine concerning Chriſt, that St. John directs a large part of his two firſt epiſtles. Polycarp, who is ſaid to have been the diſciple of our apoſtle, thus cenſures the ſame men; '*For* '*whoſoever does not confeſs that* Jeſus Chriſt *is come in the* 'fleſh, *he is Antichriſt: And whoever does not confeſs his* '*ſuffering upon the croſs, is from the devil.*' But Ignatius, who was cotemporary and acquainted with Polycarp, deſcribes their error concerning Chriſt more particularly, and exclaims thus loudly againſt them: '*Stop your ears therefore, as* '*often as any one ſhall ſpeak contrary to Jeſus Chriſt, of the* '*race of David, by the virgin Mary. Who was* truly *born,* '*did eat and drink; was* truly *perſecuted under Pontius Pilate;* '*was* alſo truly *crucified and dead:——Who was* truly *raiſed* '*from the dead by his Father, after the ſame manner as he (the* '*Father) will alſo raiſe up us who believe in him, by Chriſt* '*Jeſus: without whom we have no true life.*' I make uſe of Archbiſhop Wake's tranſlation p. 92. 151. N. B. There is no fact better eſtabliſhed in chriſtian antiquity, than that the firſt error, or hereſy, as it is called, concerning Jeſus Chriſt, was this; in not allowing him to have been really a human being, like the reſt of us.

ſtill continued in the profeſſion of chriſtianity, and maintained their peculiar doctrine, notwithſtanding the moſt expreſs condemnation of it by the apoſtle. For this remark I am indebted to Dr. Prieſtley.

To this wild and fanciful doctrine of theſe philoſophizing chriſtians, the apoſtle John, in his two firſt epiſtles, oppoſes, as well he might, his own experience concerning his lord and maſter Jeſus; the teſtimony of his ſenſes, all the teſtimony neceſſary, or that could be given, that he was really a human being, and no phantom; that the man Jeſus was himſelf the Chriſt; and that it was the characteriſtic mark of a true believer, to own, that Jeſus, who came with a divine authority from God, was really one of the human race. 1 John i. 1.—3. iv. 2. ii. 22. But on this point there is no need to dwell at preſent. Thus early however, you ſee, was laid the ground of the falſe doctrine of a preexiſtence of Chriſt, and alſo of his being compoſed, as it became afterwards called, of two natures: both the one and the other, in direct oppoſition to the declaration of the apoſtle.

That part of theſe men's notion, that Chriſt was man in appearance only, a phantom, ſoon died away, not being able to ſtand ſuch direct aſſertion of an apoſtle to the contrary. But it was not ſo with the other branch of it, his preexiſtence, equally at the ſame time reprobated and condemned by the apoſtle; who maintains, that our Lord was really

really a mortal man, a human creature. Science, falſly ſo called, as St. Paul well characterizes it, prevailed againſt the ſcriptures, and converted the bleſſed Jeſus into a different perſon from what his apoſtles declared him to have been. How this was brought about, it is my preſent purpoſe to explain.

SECTION II.

Of the corruption of the true doctrine concerning Jeſus Chriſt, by Juſtin Martyr.

In peruſing the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, we find them uniformly deſcribing GOD, as one ſingle perſon: who created and governs the world by himſelf alone, without any other divine perſon employed by, or acting for, and under him.

The perſonal pronouns—I, thou, he, me, thee, him, conſtantly uſed therein, by prophets and holy men, when the Divine Being is introduced ſpeaking himſelf, or when addreſſed, or ſpoken of; are a demonſtration of the divine unity, without any trinity or plurality of perſons; which cannot be reſiſted.

Our Saviour Chriſt, in the New Teſtament, uſes invariably the ſame language, in characterizing the Deity; and never lets fall the leaſt word, that there was any perſon but one, Jehovah, the Fa-

ther, who was God and creator, either original or ſubordinate; leaſt of all, that he himſelf was the one or the other, or any thing more than one of the human race, and a divine and extraordinary meſſenger and prophet.

In this ſtate of things, and total ſilence of the hebrew and chriſtian ſcriptures, concerning any God or creator, but Jehovah, the Father, there ſteps forth, not more than thirty years after the death of the apoſtle John, one of the firſt of the fathers, as they are ſtiled, after thoſe called apoſtolic, *Juſtin* by name, a heathen philoſopher of great integrity, and a ſincere ſeeker after truth, who had lately become a diſciple of Chriſt; and he takes upon him to maintain, that there was another *(b)* God of chriſtians, an inferior God, who miniſtered to the will and deſigns of the Father and Maker of all things, in his work of creation and government.

(b) The chriſtians, mentioned in the former ſection, whom St. John oppoſes in his epiſtles, who denied Chriſt to have been a ſuffering mortal, dividing Jeſus from the Chriſt, held the preexiſtence of this imaginary Chriſt of their's; but ſpeculated no farther, ſaid nothing of his divinity.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Whence it was, that Juſtin Martyr *brought into chriſtianity his new doctrine of* Chriſt *being the logos, the Word, an inferior God and creator.*

From what ſource Juſtin drew this notion, it will not be difficult to trace. In one place, giving in a pleaſing manner, his own hiſtory, he mentions, that after having adjoined himſelf to the ſeveral ſchools of the philoſophers that were in repute, without finding ſatisfaction, he at laſt fixed with the Platoniſts (*c*), as promiſing the knowlege of what he ſo earneſtly coveted. And he fails not to tell us, what indeed continually appears in his writings, how warmly he was attached

(*c*) This is in his dialogue with Trypho the jew: concerning which there have been doubts, whether it took place really, as he relates it: or the whole was feigned by him, in Plato's manner, thereby to have opportunity, in a more agreeable way, to make known his extraordinary inſight into the hebrew ſcriptures, and the grand diſcovery he had made in them, as he ſuppoſed.

It ſeems more probable, that he had ſome perſonal intercourſe with the jew upon the ſubject; but that the converſation had received great embelliſhment and improvements from Juſtin afterwards. Juſtin. Op. p. 103.

to Plato's doctrines; some of which he fancied to resemble the gospel; and which might be among the things, that first induced him to think favourably of it.

Being of this sect, when he embraced the christian faith, it was natural for him to be desirous of accommodating his new religion to it; and particularly to endeavour to aggrandize the character of its divine author, the blessed Jesus, of whose mean worldly figure, and ignominious death, though nobly suffering in the cause of God, philosophy had from the first, and has always been ashamed. And as Justin is the first christian, that we know of, who attributed divinity to Christ, in making him the *logos*, the *word*, the wisdom of God, we can have little doubt of his having borrowed the notion from the platonic doctrine concerning the deity, and certain divine emanations, or persons, proceeding from him, *(d)*, of which the logos was one.

But

(d) Μετα ταυτα χριστιανοις εγκαλει, ως σοφιζομενοις, εν τω λεγειν τον υιον τȣ θεȣ ειναι αυτολογον. Και οιεται σε κρατυνειν το εγκλημα, επει λογον επαγγελλομενοι υιον ειναι τȣ θεȣ, αποδεικνυμεν ȣ λογον καθαρον και αγιον, αλλα ανθρωπον ατιμοτατα απαχθεντα και αποτυμπανισθεντα. *i. e.* "After this, Celsus takes upon him to censure 'the christians for arguing sophistically, when they say, that 'the Son of God is the *Word* himself: and he thinks his 'accusation against us is fully justified, because after main-'taining the Son of God to be the *Word*, we do not exhibit

'him

But we are not left to mere conjecture, that it was Juſtin who imported into chriſtianity the notion of Chriſt being a divine perſon, and who was employed in the creation of the world. For in his apology for the chriſtians, he informs the emperors, Antoninus Pius, and his adopted ſons, M. Aurelius, L. Verus; to whom he addreſſes it; that *(e)* 'he had been long convinced himſelf, and that 'they might alſo on inquiry find, that Plato had 'learned from Moſes, and agreed with him in 'aſſerting, that the univerſe was made by the '*word* of God.'

Nevertheleſs I apprehend that we ſhall find, upon more exact and impartial inquiry, that Plato did not learn this doctrine from Moſes; but that Juſtin, out of an undue fondneſs for his former maſter, made the heathen philoſopher borrow it

 from

'him a pure and holy *Word*, but a mortal creature, moſt in-'famouſly led away as a malefactor, to be crucified." Origen. contra Celſum. lib. ii. p. 79. Ed. Cantab. 1677.— Celſus was a cotemporary of Juſtin's; and this ſhews, that the philoſophers, one of whom Juſtin had been, held the *logos*, the *Word*, not to be God, but an emanation from him. See Juſtin op. p. 81, and elſewhere, how familiar the term *logos*, the *Word*, was with him.

(e) After citing Gen. i. 1. &c; Juſtin obſerves; μετα λογου θεου, εκ των υποκειμενων και προδηλωθεντων δια Μωσεως, γεγενησθαι τον παντα κοσμον, και Πλατων, και οι ταυτα λεγοντες, και ημεις εμαθομεν, και υμεις πεισθηναι δυνασθε. Id. Ibid. p. 78.

from the jewiſh lawgiver, and thus introduced a new ſecondary God and creator into the chriſtian ſyſtem, who continues to be worſhiped by the greater part, to this day. How he contrived to ſupport this moſt extraordinary doctrine, I go on to conſider more minutely than I have found it hitherto attempted; not for any peculiar ſtrength in the arguments of this pious, miſtaken heathen convert, but becauſe he has been copied by moſt other chriſtians ſince, both arians and athanaſians, if I may ſo call them, though certainly without any intended reproach: who having adopted Plato's reveries, and made Jeſus Chriſt a preexiſtent God and creator, were intereſted to provide for *him* ſome part to act in the Old Teſtament, and a place in the ſacred hiſtory from the creation to the chriſtian era; where no Iſraelite however or jew could ever diſcover him. For it would have been moſt unaccountable, and been much againſt their new doctrine, to have introduced Chriſt as the maker of the world, and to have had nothing for him to do for the creatures he had made, till he came among them, a mortal man, to die for them.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Of Justin's *manner of proving Christ to have been an inferior God, and creator of the world, under the supreme Father of all.*

It is in his dialogue with Trypho the jew, that we have his way of arguing upon the subject. You find, however, from the words of Trypho, and from Justin's own confession, that the jews at that time had no idea, that the Messiah, whom they expected, was to be any other than a human being; and *(f) that it was to them a thing unheard of, and the height of folly, to suppose him to have preexisted before the ages, as a God, and to have submitted afterwards to have been born, and to become man.* These things however Justin undertakes to prove. But his proofs will be found void of all support from scripture, and intirely the produce of his own imagination and prejudices.

(f) το γαρ λεγειν σε, προυπαρχειν θεον οντα προ αιωνων τουτον τον χριστον, οιτα και γεννηθηναι ανθρωπον γενομενον υπομειναι, και οτι ουκ ανθρωπος εξ ανθρωπου· ου μονον παραδοξον δοκει μοι ειναι, αλλα και μωρον. Justin. Op. p. 143. 144.

SECTION

SECTION V.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been concerned in the creation of the world.*

Upon Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man in our own image:* 'leſt it ſhould be thought,' ſays Juſtin to Trypho, 'as your jewiſh doctors are wont to allege, that this phraſe implies nothing more than God's ſpeaking to himſelf; as we are often uſed to ſay, let us do ſuch a thing, when we do not intend to addreſs any other perſon: I ſhall corroborate my interpretation of it, that it is an addreſs to another perſon, and to a rational being, with whom God diſcourſed, from Gen. iii. 22. *And the Lord God ſaid, behold the man is become as one of us:* for the phraſe, *as one of us*, manifeſtly denotes a number of perſons concerned, two at leaſt. For it cannot be proved, that God ſpoke to angels, as your doctors aſſert, or that the human body is the work of angels. But it was his own offspring, produced from the Father, who was with the Father before any thing was made, with whom God here converſed; as Solomon has declared, ſpeaking of him under the name of Wiſdom (*g*).'

We

(*g*) Juſtin. Op. p. 159.

We shall shortly see, what little countenance in the passage alluded to, Solomon gives this philosophical conceit of there being another divine person, who was an assistant to the Almighty, in creating the world (*b*).

But there is no ground whatever from the sacred writings, for Justin to allege the authority of Moses, for the supreme Being speaking in this place to an inferior God or creator; when Moses, neither here, nor in any part of his writings, mentions the existence of any such subordinate creator, and when he at no time speaks of any but one single person, as God and creator.

If the Divine Being is not represented here as addressing the angels, supposed by the Israelites to be always attendant upon him, when he said, *let us make man*, or, *man is become as one of us*; why may we not take the plural number to be used

(*b*) Marcellus, the unitarian bishop of Ancyra, says, that it was 'his word, his reason, as he goes on afterwards to 'explain himself by a familiar example, to which God spake, 'when he said; *let us make man in our own image, and after 'our likeness*: there being no other God to be a fellow-crea-'ture with him. For God says, (Isaiah xliv. 6.) *I am the first, 'and I am the last; and besides me there is no God.* There is 'therefore no younger God, nor any God besides, who could 'be a fellow-worker with God.'—ουκ οντος ετερου θεου συμπλαττειν αυτω δυναμενου. Εγω γαρ ειμι, φησι θεος, πρωτος,————. ουτε ουν νεωτερος τις θεος εστιν, ουτε αλλος τις μετα ταυτα θεος ων, θεω συνεργειν δυνατος ην. Euseb. contra Marcellum p. 41.

uſed by the ſacred hiſtorian, for the ſake of diſtinction and dignity, when deſcribing God about to create man, his only rational production here below? But ſee p. 289—293 of my former Addreſs to you.

There is no end of mens fancies and ſuppoſitions on theſe occaſions, to make the ſcripture bend to the particular notions they have eſpouſed: but moſt aſſuredly, had Moſes been apprized of the exiſtence of any ſuch inferior god and creator, he would have directly and explicitly told his countrymen of it; and not have deſcribed him in ſuch an ambiguous manner, that none of them have ever found it out to this hour; not one of their prophets before Chriſt. Moſes's ſilence and theirs, ſhews, that neither he, nor they believed, that there was any ſuch ſecondary God, as Juſtin finds in his writings.

SECTION VI.

Juſtin's *way of proving Chriſt to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to Abraham in the plains of* Mamre.

Gen. xviii. 1. 2. &c. *And the* LORD *appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre: and he ſat in the tent-door in the heat of the day. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men ſtood by him;*

him: and when he ſaw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himſelf toward the ground, and ſaid, my lord, if now I have found favour in thy ſight, paſs not away, I pray thee, from thy ſervant, &c. &c.

In this chapter, there is a manifeſtation of the divine preſence, attended by three angels, in the ſhape of men, who appear to Abraham, and are entertained by him. Juſtin will have one of theſe to be ſuperior to the others, and to be, by way of eminence, the prime angel or meſſenger of the divine will, an inferior God under the ſupreme creator of all things, and bearing the title of Jehovah *(b)*.

His aſſertion is firſt built on there being two Jehovahs, mentioned, Gen. xix. 24: one of which he ſuppoſes to denote this ſubordinate God, who afterwards became man. But under the next head, it will be ſeen, that this diſcovery of two Jehovahs, in this place, is owing to a grammatical miſtake of this worthy perſon.

It is evident alſo, that throughout the viſionary ſcene, the Divine Being is plainly diſtinct from the three angels, his attendants. And certainly, no one would ever have preſumed one of theſe angels to have been ſuch a ſingular being different from the others, unleſs he had come to the reading

(i) Juſtin. Op. 151. &c.

ing of the hiſtory with ſuch a notion already infuſed into him: for Moſes gives no clue to lead to it.

Moreover, had any one of theſe three, that were now feaſted by Abraham, been an inferior God, and an inſtrument in making the world, who afterwards became the man Chriſt Jeſus; the apoſtle Paul, when alluding to this part of their ſacred hiſtory, would not have ſaid, Heb. xiii. 2. that *ſome entertained* angels *unawares*, but that they *entertained* Chriſt *himſelf*: becauſe this would have made more for his argument, and deſign, in writing his epiſtle; which was to diſpoſe his countrymen to receive Jeſus as the Chriſt, their Meſſiah.

SECTION VII.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been one of two* Jehovahs, *whom he ſuppoſes to have been engaged in the deſtruction of* Sodom.

Juſtin triumphs much in the proof here afforded, Gen. xix. 24. as he (*k*) ſuppoſes, of there being two diſtinct perſons, who are each of them God; upon the expreſs authority of Moſes. But juſtice ſhould be done to him, in obſerving, that he is here, and at all times, moſt careful to preſerve a due ſubordination between

(*k*) Juſtin. Op. 152. 154. 222.

tween them. For of this second God of his own device, whom he makes afterwards to become man, "I affirm,' says he (*l*), 'that never any 'thing was done by him, but what the creator of 'the world, above whom there is no other God, 'directed him both to do and to say.'

But had he attended to the proper meaning of the words of the sacred historian, and not brought his two Gods along with him in his own imagination, he would not have found here more than one. For it is a mere idiom of the language (*m*), to repeat the noun twice instead of using the pronoun; the Lord from the Lord, instead of the Lord from himself; and this is all that he has here to build his notion upon, of there being two Lords. To have given the true sense, it ought to

(*l*) ουδεν γαρ φημι αυτον πεπραχεναι ποτε, η απερ αυτος ο τον κοσμον ποιησας, υπερ ον αλλος ουκ εστι θεος, βεβουληται και πραξαι και ομιλησαι. Justin Martyr. Op. p. 152.

(*m*) See 1 Kings viii. 1. xii. 21. Dan. ix. 17. 2 Tim. i. 18. Hos. i. 7. In the two last instances, how much more justly would the sense of the sacred writers be given, by translating, in the first; *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy before him in that day*, instead of that aukward phraseology, *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*; and in the other, *I will save them by myself*, instead of *I will save them by the Lord their God?* especially as the present improper translation leads many in our day, to suppose Christ to be the Lord God, here intended by the prophet.

to have been tranſlated; *Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, brimſtone and fire* from himſelf *out of heaven.* So the excellent Caſtellio renders it in his old french verſion; " E le Seigneur fit plouvoir ſur Sodome et Gomorre, ſouphre e feu, de ſoi du ciel *(n)*."

The chriſtian writers after Juſtin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Euſebius, &c. copied blindly this egregious miſtake of his. Some few indeed ventured in thoſe times to publiſh their diſſent with their reaſons, ſuch as we now give; but it was too plauſible an argument for thoſe that wiſhed to exalt the character of Chriſt to give up; and the greater number carried it. In the council of Sirmium, about the middle of the fourth century, they proceeded ſo far as to make this decree againſt thoſe of the contrary ſentiment; ' If any one ſhall interpret, *the Lord* ' *rained from the Lord,* of his raining from him- ' ſelf, and not of the Father and the Son, let ' him be anathema.'

The arian as well as athanaſian chriſtians and commentators, all who have been deſirous of making Chriſt exiſt before he was born in Judea, have followed the croud, and imagined that

(n) M. de Sacy's tranſlation is ſtill perhaps more proper; Le Seigneur repandit ſur Sodome et Gomorrhe, une pluye de ſouffre et de feu, qu' il fit deſcendre du ciel.

that they found Chriſt in this paſſage. Mr. Pyle, the friend of Dr. Clarke, thus paraphraſes it. 'The λογος, the *Word* or *Son* of God, the 'repreſentative and *agent* of the Father, executed 'the vengeance of Jehovah, the Father, upon 'theſe people.' Juſtin might teach him and Dr. Clarke, this doctrine; but aſſuredly not Moſes.

SECTION VIII.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to* Jacob *at* Luz.

Geneſis xxviii. 11.—19.

The LORD, Jehovah, here appears to Jacob in a viſion, and promiſes him his protection and bleſſing.

But in a ſubſequent viſion, Gen. xxxi. 11—13. where the ſame perſon appears again, it is ſaid, *the angel of God ſpake unto him in a dream*, &c. From which Juſtin infers (*o*), that in both places, it was not God himſelf, the creator of the univerſe, who appeared, but his ſubſtitute, who is called, and who he affirms, really is, the angel, the meſſenger of the creator of the univerſe, on account of his carrying to mankind the commands of the father and maker of all things.

But

(*o*) Juſtin. Op. 156. &c.

But Juſtin is here miſled by his inattention to and ignorance of the language of the ſcripture. For the term, *angel of God*, does not always ſignify one of that ſuperior claſs of heavenly beings, who are mentioned as employed on meſſages by him. It ſtands alſo for various other things animate and inanimate, made uſe of by the Almighty, in his government of the world, and in the manifeſtation of his will and deſigns, to the human race. And in the preſent caſe, the *extraordinary dream* was *the angel of God*; by which he ſpoke to Jacob. But this matter will receive more particular illuſtration, in our review of Juſtin's next proof.

SECTION IX.

Juſtin's *way of proving* Chriſt *to have been the* Jehovah, *who appeared to* Moſes, *and called himſelf, the God of* Abraham, *&c.*

Exodus iii. 1.—6. 1. *Now Moſes kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the prieſt of Midian, and he led the flock to the backſide of the deſert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.* 2. *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, in a flame of fire, out of the midſt of a buſh: and he looked, and behold, the buſh burned with fire,*

fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. 3. *And Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt.* 4. *And when the* LORD *ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him out of the midſt of the buſh; and ſaid, Moſes, Moſes. And he ſaid, here am I.* 5. *And he ſaid, draw not nigh hither: put off thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt, is holy ground.* 6. *Moreover he ſaid, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.*

Although it is here ſaid, ver. 2. *that the angel of the* LORD *appeared in a flame of fire,* &c. yet as it immediately follows, ver. 4, *when the* LORD *ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him out of the midſt of the buſh*; this demonſtrates, that whatever is to be underſtood by the phraſe, *angel of the Lord*, it was the LORD, Jehovah, God himſelf, that was the perſon preſent who appeared and ſpoke: for no other meaning can be juſtly aſſigned to the words. And alſo to the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, God alone, as preſent, muſt be applied what follows, *I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham,* &c. Let any one read the whole, without prejudice, and he will be perſuaded it cannot be interpreted otherwiſe.

SECTION X.

Of Juſtin's *ignorance, and miſtake, in reſpect of the phraſe,* angel of God, angel of Jehovah.

But Juſtin maintains (*p*), that becauſe what appeared to Moſes, is called *the angel* of Jehovah, and it is immediately added, that Jehovah ſpoke to him, and the ſame Jehovah alſo ſaid, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, the God of Jacob*; that this could not be the creator of the univerſe, the God over whom there is no other, becauſe it could not be ſaid of him, that he was an angel or meſſenger; but that it was the ſame, whom, he imagines, he had before proved to have appeared to Abraham, and to Jacob; (but wherein we have ſhewn him to have been ſadly miſtaken) an inferior god, miniſtring and ſubſervient to the creator of the univerſe; whom he ſuppoſes afterwards to have become man.

His great error about this matter here, and in other places, aroſe from his bringing ſuch a ſecond god with him out of his philoſophy; and from his eager deſire to find him in the bible; which prevented his attending to the phraſeology of

(*p*) Juſtin. Op. p. 157.

of the ſcriptures concerning the Divine Being's manifeſtations of himſelf to mankind.

For he preſumed; (and he has been from the firſt, and is ſtill copied therein by others, to this hour:) Juſtin took it up as a thing not to be queſtioned, that whenever the angel of Jehovah, or angel of God is mentioned in the ſcriptures, a heavenly being, a ſpirit of ſuperior order, is to be underſtood; whereas, beſides this common acceptation, the term *angel* has other very important ſignifications.

'In the ſtile of prophecy,' that I may adopt the words of a moſt valuable writer, ſkilled in the ſcripture language above many, 'every thing is 'called an angel that notifies a meſſage from God, 'or executes the will of God. A prophetic dream 'is an angel; the pillar of fire that went before 'the Iſraelites, is called God's angel. The 'winds and flames of fire are angels to us, when 'uſed by God, as voices to teach us, or rods to 'puniſh us. So that God is properly ſaid to re-'veal by his angel, what he makes known, either 'by voice, by dream, by viſion, or any other 'manner of true prophetic revelation.' Lowman on Revelation. i. 1.

Thus Pſalm civ. 4. *winds* and *fire* are ſtiled God's *angels* and *miniſters*.

2 Kings xix. 35. *The angel of* the *Lord*, that went out, and ſmote in the camp of the Aſſyrians

an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand, is in Iſaiah xxxvii. 6, 7. called *a blaſt*; and was moſt probably a hot peſtilential wind, frequent in thoſe parts.

1 Chron. xxi. 14—16. A peſtilence, which the Lord ſent upon Iſrael, is emblematically ſignified by the name of a *deſtroying angel* (*q*).

Acts xii. 21. *The angel of the Lord* is by the ſacred hiſtorian interpreted to be the diſtemper, with which Herod was ſuddenly viſited.

And

(*q*) John v. 4. *For an angel went down at the ſeaſon into the bath, and troubled the water. Whoſoever then firſt after the troubling of the water ſtepped in, was made whole of whatſoever diſeaſe he had.* 'It is not ſaid, that any angel was 'ſeen: but every thing, which had a divine effect, was, in 'the jewiſh way of ſpeaking, ſaid to be done by thoſe *miniſtring ſpirits*, the angels; of which 2 Kings xix. 35. and 'Matt. xxviii. 2. may be reckoned inſtances.' Bp. Pearce.

I would beg leave to obſerve, that ſome may ſee cauſe to doubt, whether there was in reality any healing virtue in theſe waters at all, of the very extraordinary kind deſcribed, ſo that one perſon only was healed who happened firſt to ſtep into them, and no other to be benefited at the time.

It may rather perhaps be a common ſtory, and the thing generally reported to have taken place at that feſtival; which the apoſtle recounts, as it was delivered to him. As to the miracle wrought by our Lord, in curing the man by a word's ſpeaking, it had no connection at all with the healing virtue of theſe waters, whether real or imaginary.

And thus in the preſent inſtance; the fire in the buſh that remained unconſumed, together with the ſupernatural articulate voice, were the *angel of the Lord*; by which the Divine Being manifeſted his extraordinary preſence, and will to Moſes; and not any ſecond, inferior God, perſonating him, and acting in his name.

SECTION XI.

Of Juſtin's *additional proof, that it could not be the Almighty Being himſelf, who appeared to* Moſes.

Juſtin, in the place above, adds another ſatisfactory reaſon as he thinks, why it could not be the Almighty Being himſelf who appeared to Moſes; 'becauſe (*r*), ſays he, no one, who was 'not intirely out of his mind, would ever aſſert, 'that the creator and father of the univerſe. 'could leave the ſuperceleſtial manſions, and 'make his abode in a ſmall corner of the earth.'

But he did not reflect, how juſtly it might be retorted upon him, as a mark of his own weakneſs, and narrow thoughts of the infinite, eternal God, to ſuppoſe it poſſible for him to be ſo confined to any one part, as not to be preſent and

(*r*) Juſtin. Op. p. 157.

attentive to every part of the univerſe, which he has made.

Juſtin alſo did not ſee his inconſiſtency, nor conſider, how directly he contradicted the apoſtle, by this fancy of his philoſophy, in making Chriſt an inferior God, who perſonated the ſupreme, and appeared to the patriarchs, and to Moſes; when it is moſt plainly declared by St. Paul, Hebrews i. 1. &c. that *God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son:* thereby expreſsly excluding Chriſt from having miniſtered to God, or having had any commiſſion from him, till his public miniſtry began in Judea, in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius, when he was about thirty years of age. Luke iii. 1, 22, 23.

SECTION XII.

Of Juſtin's *way of proving to the emperors, that it was* Chriſt, *and not the ſupreme Being himſelf, who appeared to* Moſes.

Our author, in his firſt apology, after having mentioned as a thing quite certain, this heathen device of his own, that it was Chriſt and not the Divine Being himſelf, that appeared to Moſes, goes

goes on very frankly to tell the princes, to whom he addreſſes himſelf (*f*); 'All jews, however,' ſays he, 'do not allow that it was Chriſt, but rather the God, 'whoſe name is ineffable, who ſpoke to Moſes. But, 'for this, the prophetic ſpirit, by the abovementioned prophet, thus rebukes them; (Iſa. i. 3.) *The ox 'knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſter's crib: 'but Iſrael doth not know, my people doth not conſider.* And Jeſus Chriſt alſo reproves them, for 'not knowing who the Father, and who the Son 'was; when he ſays, Matt. xi. 27. *No man knoweth 'the Father, but the Son; neither knoweth any man 'the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever 'the Son will reveal him.'*

It is obvious here to remark, that the emperors would not be likely to think better of the goſpel, by being told, that jews and chriſtians could not agree about the God, of whom their ſacred books ſpoke. But if they had been capable of reading their books, they would not have thought very favourably of Juſtin's underſtanding in the preſent inſtance; as they would have eaſily ſeen how wretchedly he was miſtaken in his interpretation of them. For in the former inſtance, the prophet Iſaiah had no thought of Chriſt, nor referred to any thing relating to him, but ſpeaks merely of the ſottiſh ignorance and impiety of his countrymen, at the time that he wrote. And in

(*f*) Juſtin. Op. p. 81.

in the paſſage produced from St. Matthew, our Saviour is by no means paſſing cenſure upon any, for their not acknowleging him to have been an inferior God that appeared to Moſes: nothing could be more foreign to the occaſion, or to his deſign. But he is making a ſolemn declaration of his miſſion and powers from God, and alleging; that the Father of the univerſe had communicated to him all things concerning the ſalvation of mankind and the bringing of them to eternal life, which had never been made known to any prophet but himſelf; *viz. No one knoweth the Father but the Son*; and moreover, which no one could come to the knowlege of but by a communication from him, who had been thus favoured of God; *viz. neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.*

SECTION XIII.

Of Juſtin's *way of proving* Solomon *to ſpeak concerning Chriſt, in* Proverbs viii.

The deſcription of Divine Wiſdom by Solomon, being appealed to by Juſtin, as his prime evidence for the preexiſtence of Chriſt, and applied to him as ſuch; it muſt not paſs unnoticed.

* I ſhall

'I ſhall bring another teſtimony from the 'ſcripture, my friends,' ſays Juſtin (*t*), in his dialogue with Trypho and ſome other jews; 'that 'in the beginning, before his works of creation, 'God produced from himſelf a certain rational 'principle, power, δυναμιν, which is differently 'ſtiled by the holy ſpirit, ſometimes the glory of 'the Lord, the Son, at other times wiſdom, an 'angel, at others God, the Lord, the word; 'ſometimes he calleth himſelf (*u*) captain: for 'he has all theſe appellations, from his miniſtring 'to the will of the Father, and from having been 'brought into being by his will.—The *word of* '*Wiſdom,*' continues he, 'ſhall teſtify for me, '*the God,* who was brought into being by the 'Father of the univerſe, who is the word, wiſ-'dom, power, glory, of him who brought him 'into being, and who thus ſpeaks by Solomon, Prov. viii. 22.—31. *The* LORD *poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, before ever the world was. When there were no depths,*

(*t*) Juſtin. Op. 157. 158.

(*u*) Juſtin alludes to Joſh. v. 13. &c. where there is a viſion, or manifeſtation of the divine preſence, exhibited by the appearance of a captain with a drawn ſword, calling himſelf, *a captain of the hoſt of Jehovah.* But there is nothing to mark out Chriſt, or any other but God himſelf; and particularly, ſince in continuation of the ſame viſion, as it ſeems, vi. 2. the hiſtory ſays, *And the Lord* (Jehovah) *ſaid unto Joſhua,* &c.

depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were ſettled; before the hills was I brought forth. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the earth: when he eſtabliſhed the clouds above, when he ſtrengthened the fountains of the deep, when he gave to the ſea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the ſons of men.

1. But Solomon will be found to give no more countenance to Juſtin's or rather Plato's ſecondary and ſubordinate God and creator, than Moſes.

And in the firſt place, ſince he never in any other part of his writings, ſpeaks of any ſuch great being, diſtinct from God, we may naturally and juſtly underſtand him here, which has been noted above p. 29. as deſcribing the Almighty under his attribute of wiſdom, repreſented as a perſon always with him, and his delight, (by a figure of ſpeech uſual with the ſacred and other eſteemed moral writers,) to teach and impreſs the reader in a more lively and forcible manner, that the world was made and is governed by the moſt perfect wiſdom.

2. If

2. If there had really been ſuch a divine perſon, ſo nearly related to mankind, as to have been their maker, and governor, under God, and Solomon had known it, he would not have contented himſelf with intimating it in ſuch an obſcure ambiguous manner, but would have mentioned it frequently and plainly; nay, as was ſaid before of Moſes, it would have been his duty to have told it, he would have been inexcuſeable in the omiſſion.

But we meet with nothing of the kind. In his ſolemn prayer at the dedication of the temple, where it might have been a proper place to have taken notice of ſo great a being, next to the eternal, with whom they were ſo intimately concerned, if there had been any ſuch; there is no God named but one, Jehovah, acting by himſelf alone, hearing prayer, and forgiving the ſins of his penitent creatures; in language ſo diſtinct and expreſſive of the divine unity, ſo excluſive of Chriſt or any other perſon, as is impoſſible to miſconſtrue or evade.

COROLLARY.

From the foregoing particular examination of Juſtin's arguments, and their turning out ſo weak and inſufficient, we are conſtrained to make this general inference; that his notion of Chriſt being a ſecond

a ſecond inferior God, miniſtring to the ſupreme Father of the univerſe, in his works of creation and government, is the fiction of a warm fancy, derived from Plato's philoſophy, and thence obtruded by him upon the ſacred writings; Moſes and Solomon having been ſhewn to have been totally ignorant of any ſuch ſubordinate god, of any perſon but one, being God, and the creator and governor of the world.

And as Moſes, the divine lawgiver of the jews, knew nothing of their meſſiah, Chriſt, being to be any thing but a man of their nation, who was to be born in ſome future time; we might conclude, from this circumſtance only, had we not numberleſs arguments beſides, that St. John in his goſpel could not treat of Chriſt as being the logos, the *Word*, a God of any ſort concerned in the creation of all things, when Moſes confeſſedly was a ſtranger to the exiſtence of any ſuch perſon, in his hiſtory of the creation.

SECTION

SECTION XIV.

Of the cauſe of Juſtin's *aſſerting in ſo very poſitive and peremptory a ſtile, that Chriſt was the agent of the Deity at the creation of the world, and in his government of it afterwards.*

It has been made evident in the above inſtances, and might be ſhewn in all others of the kind, produced by Juſtin, that he is intirely miſtaken in his explanation of the ſcriptures of the old Teſtament, and in his application of them to Chriſt; and alſo that Moſes and Solomon, from whoſe writings he would extract his notions, were wholly unacquainted with there being any ſuch inferior God and creator, as he makes them ſpeak ſo familiarly of; never naming, or appearing to know of any other than one perſon, who was God, and creator.

In the meanwhile, we are ſurprized with the very poſitive tone, with which this good man delivers himſelf. He ſpeaks as if all he ſaid upon the ſubject, was demonſtration, and incapable of being confuted; and treats the jews he converſes with, as mere cyphers, and totally ignorant of their own ſcriptures, for not giving immediate credit to his interpretation of them.

We

We ſhould have been at a loſs to account for his taking up ſuch a conceit in ſuch a high manner, if he himſelf had not given us a clue for it. And the real ſolution of the matter is, that Juſtin was under a deluſion, vainly imagining, that he had a ſupernatural inſight given him into the meaning of the ſacred writings, in this reſpect.

In one place, immediately before he delivers his explanation of the divine appearance to Jacob, he ſays to the jews *(w)*; 'I ſhall tell you plain 'fact, without any art, or embelliſhment of words, 'for which I have no talent. But it hath pleaſed 'God, of his eſpecial favour, to impart to me the 'gift of underſtanding his ſcriptures. And of 'this his grace to me, I call upon all to partake 'freely and without reward; leſt, for not com-'municating ſo great a benefit to others, I ſhould 'myſelf be condemned, in the judgment which 'the creator of the world will exerciſe by our 'Lord Jeſus Chriſt.'

In the ſame dialogue with Trypho, p. 195. After citing Matt. xi. 27. *All things are delivered to me of the Father: and no man knoweth the Father but the Son; nor the Son but the Father, and they to whom the Son ſhall reveal him.* 'To us, 'therefore,' continues he, 'hath he revealed all 'theſe things, which by his ſpecial gift we have 'learned from the ſcriptures; in that we have 'been

(w) Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 134

'been brought to the knowlege of his being the 'first born of God, and before all the creatures; 'and at the same time the son of the patriarchs, in-'asmuch as he was descended from them, by a 'virginof their race, and became an ordinary mor-'tal, exposed to ignominy and suffering.'

'And towards the end of his dialogue, Justin says, '(x) Do you think, Sirs, that we should have 'been able to have understood these things in the 'scriptures, unless, by the will of God, we had re-'ceived the gift from him.'

As Justin was a person of unquestioned probity, we cannot doubt of his sincerity in believing himself to have had an extraordinary insight into the scriptures given him by the Almighty, though he most (y) wretchedly imposed upon himself in it. His

(x) Εγω τε αν ειπον· οιεσθε αν ημας ποτε, ω ανδρες, νενοηκεναι δυνηθηναι εν ταις γραφαις ταυτα, ει μη θεληματι τȣ θελησαντος αυτα ελαβομεν χαριν τȣ νοησαι;

(y) Justin attributes Joshua's victory over the Amalekites, Exod. xvii. 9.——12. not so much to the prayers of Moses, as to the circumstance of Joshua's leading the battle and having the same name with Jesus in the hebrew, and to the hands of Moses making the figure of the cross. ȣ γαρ οτι ȣτως ηυχετο Μωσης, δια τȣτο κρεισσων ο λαος εγενετο· αλλ' οτι εν αρχη της μαχης τȣ ονοματος τȣ Ιησȣ οντος, αυτος το σημειον τȣ σταυρȣ εποιει. Id. Ibid. p. 188.

In the same page, in Deut. xxxiii 13.—17. he finds the great power and mystery of the cross, particularly in the unicorn's

His alleging that he himſelf was inſpired, is no proof to us of it; and we can no more admit any new revelation from his own word, without ſome ſtamp of a divine authority, than we can pay reſpect to the waking dreams and revelations of (z) Baron Swedenborg.

corn's horns. And after mentioning theſe inſtances, he goes on to ſay, p. 189. *If therefore any one hath not received this great favour from God, to underſtand the things ſaid and done by the prophets, it will be of no avail to him to read their ſayings, or the things done by them,* if he can give no reaſon for them.

(z) I cannot here omit an account, which I received from a perſon living, of great worth and credit; that a friend of his, ſeveral years ago, walking with Baron Swedenborg along Cheapſide, in one part, the Baron ſuddenly bowed very low down to the ground; when the gentleman, lifting him up and aſking, what he was about, the Baron replied, by aſking him, if he did not ſee Moſes paſs by; and told him, that he had bowed to him. A man that could ſee Moſes walking along Cheapſide, might ſee any thing. And Juſtin's word, and pretence for being inſpired, is as little to be truſted, who could aſcribe a victory of the Iſraelites to the poſition of Moſes's hands, and to Joſhua's particular name.

SECTION

SECTION XV.

Whence it was that Juſtin *took up the idea of his being inſpired in this reſpect.*

The probable account of Juſtin's deluſion may ſeem to have been this. Being of a warm enthuſiaſtic turn, it ſtruck his imagination, that Chriſt was the logos, the chief of thoſe emanations from the ſupreme Being, of which his favourite Plato ſpoke. And as what we much wiſh, we eaſily perſuade ourſelves to be true, he was led to fancy, that he had a private revelation from God, that his mind was extraordinarily enlightened to ſee, that it was Chriſt, as the logos, who was mentioned by Moſes and Solomon in thoſe paſſages, in which we have ſeen him ſo egregiouſly miſtaken.

What might at firſt promote, and continually confirmed this diſpoſition in Juſtin to exalt the character of Chriſt, was the ſhame of the croſs, the diſgrace of having the founder of his new religion, a mere ſuffering mortal; which was ſlightly obſerved above.

It is remarkable, that he ſeldom mentions this latter circumſtance, of Chriſt's being of the human race, but he immediately endeavours to wipe

off the ſtain of it, by throwing in ſomething concerning his ſuppoſed divine generation.

In his apology to the emperors, after a fine paſſage, in which he deſcribes the pure and rational worſhip which the chriſtians paid to the creator of the univerſe, he ſays *(a)*, 'I ſhall ſhew 'you, that with reaſon we honour him, who was 'our preceptor in theſe things; and who was for 'this end born, even Jeſus Chriſt, who was crucified by Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea, 'in the reign of Tiberius Cæſar; whom we are 'taught to have been the Son of the only true 'God, and hold him in the ſecond rank; and 'in the third, the prophetic ſpirit. But in this we 'are counted to be perſons out of our ſenſes, in 'aſſigning the ſecond place after the unchangeable 'and eternal God, and father of all things, to *a 'man that was put to death upon the croſs.* But 'they know not *the great myſtery* that is in it.

A little after he goes on thus to acquaint the emperors *(b)*. "But Jeſus, who is called the Son 'of God, if he had been only a man, was, for 'his wiſdom, worthy to have been called the 'Son of God; ſince all writers agree in ſtiling 'God, the father of men and of gods. But if, 'beſides this common generation, we ſay that 'Jeſus was born of God, as being *the Word* of God, 'which I have obſerved before, we only herein 'agree

(*a*) Juſtin. Op. p. 51. (*b*) Juſtin. Op. p. 56. 57.

'agree with you, who call Mercury, *the word*, 'who carries meſſages from God, his interpreter. 'And if any object to us, that he ſuffered upon a 'croſs; we may reply, that it is nothing more 'than happened to thoſe, who are by you reckon-'ed the ſons of Jupiter, who are reported to have 'undergone different kinds of death: ſo that in 'his peculiar kind of death Jeſus had nothing more 'reproachful than they. But *how far he ſurpaſſed* '*them in virtue and goodneſs, will appear in what* '*ſhall follow, or rather has already appeared.* '*For true excellency can beſt be diſcerned by men's* '*actions.*'

It is to be lamented, that Juſtin did not always abide by this ſuperior excellency of moral character, as Chriſt's greateſt honour and dignity; ſince it is in itſelf the higheſt poſſible perfection: inſtead of placing it, in a ſuppoſed preexiſtence, and a fanciful divine generation.

SECTION XVI.

Juſtin *was the inventor of the doctrine of* Chriſt's *preexiſtence, and of his being the agent of the deity, in the old Teſtament.*

It may hence be inferred, that Juſtin was the firſt author and propagator of the doctrine of Chriſt

being an inferior God, and ſubordinate creator of the world. For his aſſertions, that he had a divine gift beſtowed upon him, whereby he found out this in the ſcriptures of the old Teſtament, beſpeak it to have been quite a new thing to him, unheard of and unknown before. If he had been apprized that others had publiſhed the ſame doctrine before him, he would not have pretended to the diſcovery alone, and taken the credit of it to himſelf. For although much miſtaken in this and other matters, he was a moſt honeſt man, and free from vanity, and from all deſire of ſetting himſelf off for any thing. We may therefore conclude, that no chriſtian whatſoever, at leaſt that Juſtin knew of, had ever entertained ſuch a thought concerning Chriſt before him.

Now this circumſtance alone, to you that can judge without prejudice, will be a ſufficient confutation of that imaginary preexiſtence, which Juſtin would give to Chriſt, and a proof that he was intirely one of the human race. For if ſuch a doctrine had been true; that Chriſt, in any ſhape, or under any character whatſoever, had been the agent of the deity, in the creation of the univerſe, and afterwards his miniſter in the government particularly of this globe that we inhabit; can it be a thing poſſible, that he ſhould never have told ſo wonderful a thing to his diſciples, and that they ſhould not have mentioned it to their diſciples,

and

and to the world? But nothing of this kind ever tranſpired. For it has been ſhewn, that all that language, of *coming from God, coming down from heaven*, and the like, ſignified nothing more than his having an extraordinary divine commiſſion to preach the goſpel. And it has been often, and rightly and juſtly obſerved, on theſe occaſions, that no notice is taken of Chriſt as having preexiſted; no reſpect or regards mentioned in the ſcripture, as paid or to be paid to him, but for the character which he ſo nobly ſuſtained as a human being in this world. The higheſt praiſe recorded as given to him, is aſcribed to him, as to the *lamb that was ſlain*: not to the Eternal, or the being next to the Eternal, for condeſcending to become man; but to the holy and innocent Jeſus who willingly ſurrendered his life in the cauſe of truth and of human happineſs. So that as no account is made of any thing that he was or did, before his birth in Judea, we muſt conclude, that he had no character before that time, and that then was the date of his exiſtence.

If it ſhould be ſaid, that before the age of Juſtin, Barnabas had ſpoken of Chriſt as being concerned in the creation of the world, I would beg leave to refer to another place (*c*), for a full conſideration of the language uſed by this venera-

(*c*) Sequel to an Apology for reſigning the vicarage of Catterick, p. 425—433.

ble ancient, whom very few of the learned allow to have been St. Paul's companion.

But indeed that writer, with others at that early period, had ſuch a rage of allegorizing every thing in the Old Teſtament, and applying it to Chriſt and the goſpel, that there is no poſſibility of collecting their real ſentiments; if we could be ſure that we have their genuine words. However, ſhould they be found to teach any doctrine concerning Chriſt, to which the ſcripture gives no countenance, there can be no heſitation, which of the two we are to prefer.

Leſt any of thoſe, who are not in the way of inquiring with exactneſs into ſuch matters, ſhould be perplexed with the language concerning Chriſt, which is found in another of the apoſtolic fathers; I would take occaſion here briefly to ſay, that with reſpect to the epiſtles of Ignatius, it is univerſally allowed, that liberties have been taken with them, by different parties of chriſtians; and I would only make one remark.

When (ſee Cotelier's edition of the Patres Apoſtolici, by Le Clerc. vol. ii.) in thoſe epiſtles of this father, reckoned to be the leaſt corrupted, we read in the beginning of the epiſtle to the Epheſians:

Page 11. ‘ It is by the will of the Father, ‘ and of Jeſus Chriſt, *our God.*

Page

Page 15. ‘ Our *God* Jeſus Chriſt, was car-
‘ ried in the womb of the virgin Mary.’
Page 27—29. ‘ Jeſus Chriſt, *God.*’
Page 30. ‘ To the Smyrneans. I give thanks
to the *God* Jeſus Chriſt.’
——— ‘ To Polycarp. Farewell in our *God*
‘ Jeſus Chriſt:’

With our New Teſtament in our heads, when we find ſuch language, we muſt ſay, that the good father went beyond his rule, in talking in ſuch a different ſtrain from that of the ſcriptures, in making Chriſt any thing above the condition of a creature, and in applying the ſacred name of God ſo familiarly to him. But it is moſt probable, that the word, *God*, in theſe places, was put in by ſome copyiſts, who wiſhed to make this early writer appear to favour their peculiar ſentiments of Chriſt.

SECTION XVII.

The early chriſtian writers who came after Juſtin, *adopted this notion of* Chriſt *being the agent, and repreſentative of the Deity in the Old Teſtament.*

But though we cannot take Juſtin's word without proof, that he had a particular illumination from the Divine Being, which enabled him to diſcover

cover Chriſt to be ſpoken of by Moſes and Solomon, as an inferior God and under-creator and governor of the world, before he became man; and are moreover perſuaded from examining their own words, and the weakneſs of Juſtin's inferences from them, that neither Moſes nor Solomon knew aught of Chriſt's preexiſtence, or of the exiſtence of any ſuch great Being with God; it was nevertheleſs a doctrine ſo palatable, and agreeable to the learned of thoſe times, who had embraced chriſtianity, that the greater part of them received it implicitly, and even improved on Juſtin's invention.

This excellent perſon's known piety and many virtues, added to the authoritative air which he aſſumed of one really believing himſelf to be inſpired, got the aſcendant over men's minds, and made them take what he ſaid to be true, without examination. And as it is of importance to make out clearly to all chriſtian people, how ſuch a deluſion concerning Chriſt's preexiſtence, obtained a footing, and ſpread itſelf to ſuch an extent, it will be proper for me to produce inſtances, from ſome of the principal chriſtian fathers, and ſucceſſors of Juſtin, not omitting others near our own times, to ſhew the extreme readineſs with which they all fell into this notion, and their ſpeaking of and citing the thing, as a real fact, without the leaſt

least distrust, as they would any the most acknowleged fact in the scriptures, though nothing more than this good man's fanciful comment upon them.

SECTION XVIII.

Of Irenæus's *copying of* Justin's *error concerning* Christ.

And IRENÆUS shall lead the van; one, who when a boy, had known Polycarp; that had conversed with those who had seen Christ himself. This venerable writer was well acquainted with Justin's works, and held him in great reverence, as appears from his manner of quoting him (*d*).

In

(*d*) Και καλως Ιυστινος, εν τω προς Μαρκιωνα συνταγματι, φησι· ὁτι αυτω τω Κυριω ουδ' αν επεισθην, αλλον θεον καταγγελλοντι παρα τον δημιουργον.—i. e. 'Well does *Justin* declare in his treatise against 'Marcion; "I should not have believed the Lord himself, "if he had taught any other to be God than the creator."

Irenæi Op. Ed. Massnet. p. 233.

Marcion was a learned man, cotemporary with Justin, who fell into very extravagant errors. He was one of those early christians, pointed at above, p. 132, who, through ignorance, and wrong views of the system of nature, and of the imperfections of the jewish dispensation, maintained, that it was some inferior God, who was the creator, and giver of the law; and that 'Jesus was not the Son of the creator, but 'came from the supreme Father, when Pontius Pilate was 'procurator

In his curious and learned work againſt hereſies, he ſays; 'God (*e*) hath always with him the word 'and wiſdom, the Son and Spirit, by whom he 'made all things freely, and of his own accord; 'and to whom he ſpeaks,' Gen. i. 26. ſaying, *let us make man after our image and likeneſs.* He had ſaid the ſame a little before (*f*); only there he ſtiles the Son and Spirit, God's hands. This is all a fine ſtraight ſtory. But who told Irenæus, or Juſtin, that God had two ſuch aſſiſtants in the creation? Not Moſes: nor Chriſt, or his apoſtles.

'And again,' proceeds he (*g*), 'in the over-'throw of Sodom, the ſcripture ſaith; *The Lord rained*

'procurator of Judea, under Tiberius Ceſar; and that he was 'manifeſted to the jews in a human form, to diſſolve the law 'and the prophets, and to correct the works of the god who 'made the world:' Jeſum autem ab eo Patre, qui eſt ſuper mundi fabricatorem deum, venientem in Judeam, temporibus Pontii Pilati præſidis, qui fuit procurator Tiberii Ceſaris, in hominis forma manifeſtatum his qui in Judea erant, diſſolventem prophetas et legem, et omnia opera ejus dei, qui mundum fecit. Idem ibidem, p. 106.

(*e*) Adeſt enim Deo ſemper, verbum et Sapientia, filius et ſpiritus, per quos, et in quibus, omnia libere et ſponte fecit; ad quos et loquitur; dicens, *faciamus hominem ad imaginem et ſimilitudinem noſtram*, p. 253.

(*f*) Homo autem,—qui ſecundum ſimilitudinem Dei formatus eſt, et per manus ejus plaſmatus eſt, hoc eſt, per filium et ſpiritum; quibus et dixit, Gen. i. 26. *faciamus hominem*, p. 228.

(*g*) Et iterum in everſione Sodomitarum Scriptura ait, *Et pluit Dominus ſuper Sodomam et Gomorrham, ignem et ſulfur a Domino*

'*rained upon Sodom and Gomorrha brimſtone and* '*fire from the Lord out of heaven.* The Son is 'here intended,' continues Irenæus, p. 190. 'who 'is the perſon that converſed with Abraham, and 'who received power from the Father to puniſh 'the Sodomites for their wickedneſs.' Irenæus here copies Juſtin's miſtake in grammar, in bringing in *the Son*; and making two perſons concerned, where Moſes intended only one.

P. 236. 'On this account (*b*), ſays he, the 'jews fell away from God, by not receiving the 'Word, but thinking to know the Father without 'the Word, *i. e.* without the Son, in not acknowleging him for God, who ſpoke in a human 'form to Abraham, Gen. xviii. and again to 'Moſes, ſaying, *I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of* '*my people who are in Egypt, and am come down to* '*them*, Exod. iii. 7. 8. For in theſe things the 'Son was manifeſted.' Irenæus would have found no

a Domino de cælo. Filium enim hic ſignificat, qui et Abrahæ colloquutus ſit, a patre accepiſſe poteſtatem ad judicandum Sodomitas, propter iniquitatem eorum. p, 180.

(b) Propter hoc judæi exceſſerunt a Deo, Verbum ejus non recipientes, ſed putantes per ſeipſum Patrem ſine Verbo, id eſt, ſine filio, poſſe cognoſcere; Deum neſcientes eum qui in figura loquutus eſt humana ad Abraham, et iterum ad Moyſem, dicentem, *videns vidi vexationem populi mei in Egypto, et deſcendi liberare eos.* Hæc enim filius, qui eſt verbum Dei ab initio præſtruebat. p. 236.

no other God here but Jehovah, the Father, if he had not brought another God, the Son, along with him to the reading of the books of Moſes. And you cannot but obſerve here, how he cites and miſapplies, Matth. xi. 27. in his alluſion to it, of *knowing the Father without the Son*; as Juſtin had done before him.

SECTION XIX.

Of Clemens Alexandrinus's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt.

CLEMENT of Alexandria in Egypt, a moſt learned man, and ingenious, animated writer; ſuppoſed to have been originally a heathen; lived at the latter end of the ſecond century; we find him often celebrated as preſident of the famous ſchool in that city; where many eminent perſons, Origen and others, were bred up under him. He was a man of deep piety and virtue; and a preacher of the goſpel in dangerous times. One of his works, intitled the Pædagogue, *i. e.* the Schoolmaſter, is written purpoſely to form the minds of youth to goodneſs, to make them not only ſcholars, but better men; βελτιωσαι, ε διδαξαι. It is full of excellent things; but would have been read with more pleaſure and profit if it had not been diſfigured and obſcured, with bringing in Chriſt continually,

tinually, in imitation of Juſtin; where the ſcriptures take no notice of any ſuch imaginary perſonage, and God himſelf alone is intended. You will ſee his manner, in the following extracts, and quotations from this ſingle work.

(*i*) 'Our (pædagogue) maſter, the holy *god* 'Jeſus, the *Word*, the guide of all mankind, he, 'the benevolent *god*, is our maſter. And the 'holy ſpirit ſays of him in one place, in the 'ſong; Deut. xxxii. 10. 11. 12. *He ſupported* 'his people in a deſart land, and in the waſte howl-'ing wilderneſs: he led him about, he inſtructed 'him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an 'eagle protecteth her neſt, fluttereth over her young, 'taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the 'Lord alone did lead him; there was no ſtrange 'god with him. Here I think the ſcripture evi-'dently ſhews our maſter, and the care he takes.

'At another time, he owns himſelf the maſter, 'when ſpeaking in his own perſon, he ſays, 'Exod. xx. 2. *I am the* LORD *thy God, who* 'brought thee out of the land of Egypt.'

'The ſame appeared to Abraham, Gen. xxvii. 1. 'and ſaid, 'I am thy God: do that which is well-'pleaſing before me. But he goes on ſtill more like 'a good ſchoolmaſter, to inſtruct his child: *and* 'be thou perfect. And I will put my covenant be-'tween me and thee, and thy ſeed.'

'But

(*i*) Clem. Alex. Op. Ed. Potter. p. 131. 132.

'But he appears moſt evidently the Patriarch, 'Jacob's maſter, when he ſays to him, Geneſis 'xxviii. 15. *Behold, I am with thee, and will 'keep thee in all places whither thou goeſt, and will 'bring thee again into this land: for I will not 'leave thee till I have done all that which I have 'ſpoken to thee.* With him alſo he is ſaid to have 'wreſtled, Gen. xxxii. 24. *And Jacob was left a-'lone: and there wreſtled a man with him,* namely 'the maſter, *until the break of day.*'

'This is God, the *Word,* the leader of his chil-'dren, who afterwards ſaid to him, Gen. xlvi. 3. '*Fear not to go down into Egypt.*'

Thus does this learned man, with the moſt perfect ſatisfaction, uſher in Chriſt, governing and directing the Iſraelites, as an inferior God, where no one elſe, that is not under the ſame prejudices, can find any other but the Almighty Being, Jehovah himſelf.

And he advances this, without any apology, as an undoubted fact, which none of his readers would call in queſtion. It is a thing not otherwiſe to be accounted for but by ſuppoſing, that either Clement thought himſelf inſpired, or followed one whom he believed to have a divine gift of interpreting the ſcriptures, which Juſtin pretended to be poſſeſſed of, in the way ſhewn above.

What confuſed work learned men already began to make, with their thus introducing Chriſt as a ſecond

a ſecond God, appears from the following prayer, with which Clement finiſhes his Pædagogue *(e)*.

'It remains now that after this copious panegyric of the *Word*, we ſhut up the whole with prayer to the *Word*;—*Be propitious to thy children, O maſter, father, charioteer of Iſrael, ſon and father, both one, Lord! Grant unto us*—— *that being arrived at the perfect day, giving thanks we may praiſe, and praiſing we may give thanks to the only Father and Son; Son and Father; Son, maſter and teacher; with alſo the holy ſpirit; one in all things; in whom are all things; by whom all things are one; by whom is eternity; of whom all are members; whoſe the glory, the ages. To him, in all things good, in all things excellent, in all things wiſe, in all things righteous; To him be glory now and for all ages (f).*'

By comparing this with the prayer which our Lord taught us, you perceive how far the learned had

(e) Οπερ ουν λοιπον, επι τοιαυτη παιηγυρει τυ λογυ, τω λογω προσευξωμεθα· κ.τ.λ. Clem. Alex. Op. vol. i. p. 311.

(f) From this ſtrange rhapſody, as if it was of divine authority, Archbiſhop Potter gravely concludes, that 'we have 'a moſt ample teſtimony to the conſubſtantiality of the Son of 'God, and to his true divinity, and to that of the holy ſpirit, 'againſt the Arians.' Porro ampliſſimum hoc τυ ομουσιυ filii dei, ejuſque ac S. Spiritus veræ divinitatis, contra Arianos, teſtimonium eſt. Not. in loc.

had already departed from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, with reſpect to the object of worſhip. But it is proper to obſerve, that however highly Clement thought of Chriſt as a god, he held him infinitely below the Divine Being himſelf. For in his Exhortation to the gentiles, in a fine ſtrain of eloquence and devotion, he introduces Chriſt himſelf ſinging praiſes to God.

'Then,' ſays he, (g) '*ſhalt thou join the cho-*
'*rus of angels, hymning the Eternal, him who is*
'*without beginning, and without end,* the only true
'God; God the word, joining together with us
'in the ſong. *The everlaſting Jeſus, the one*
'*great high prieſt of the one God, and his Fa-*
'*ther, prays for mankind, and thus addreſſes*
'*them:*' "*Hear me, ye innumerable tribes, or ra-*
"*ther all ye rational creatures of God, barbarians*
"*and greeks! I call to the whole human race,*
"*whoſe maker I am, by the will of the Father.*
"*Come unto me, and arrange yourſelves under the*
"*one God, and the one word of God!*" &c. &c.

(i) Id. Ibid. p. 92. 93.

SECTION

SECTION XX.

Of Tertullian's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt.

TERTULLIAN, the moſt antient of the latin fathers, flouriſhed about the year 200. He was a man of great learning and irreproachable character; but ſevere in his temper, and given to carry things to extremes.

What he advances after Juſtin, on the ſubject of Chriſt being the acting God of the old world, is a proof of this. One inſtance from him will ſuffice. It is taken from his book againſt Praxeas, who was unqueſtionably a Unitarian, though Tertullian miſunderſtood and miſrepreſents his ſentiments.

(*b*) 'Thus *all things*,' ſays he, '*were made by* 'the *Son, and without* him nothing was made. 'But

(*b*) Sic omnia per filium facta ſunt, et ſine illo factum eſt nihil. Nec putes ſola opera mundi per filium facta, ſed et quæ a deo exinde geſta ſunt. Pater enim qui diligit filium, et omnia tradidit in manu ejus; utique a primordio diligit, a primordio tradidit. Ex quo a primordio ſermo erat apud deum, et Deus erat ſermo, cui data eſt omnis poteſtas a patre in cœlis et in terra. Non judicat pater quenquam, ſed omne judicium tradidit filio: a primordio tamen. Omnem

' *But do not imagine, that all the works only of*
' *creation were wrought by the Son; all the tranſ-*
' *actions of the deity have been alſo from that time*
' *carried on by him.* For the Father *who* loveth
' the Son, and hath *delivered all things into his*
' *hand, loveth him alike from the beginning, and*
' *from the beginning hath delivered all things to him;*
' *becauſe that* the Word was with God *from the*
' *beginning,* and the Word was God, to whom all
' power is given in heaven and earth *by the Fa-*
' *ther.* The Father judgeth no man, but hath
' committed all judgment to the Son: *but then*
' *all is from the beginning. For the ſaying, all*
' *power, all judgment, all things made by him,*
' *all things delivered into his hand, admits no ex-*
' *ception or limitation of time. For they will not*
' *be all things, if they are not of all time. It is*
' *the Son therefore, who hath executed all judg-*
' *ment from the beginning; who demoliſhed the proud*
' *tower of Babel, dividing their tongues; who pu-*
' *puniſhed*

Omnem enim dicens poteſtatem, et omne judicium, et omnia per eum facta, et omnia tradita in manu ejus, nullam exceptionem temporis permittit; quia omnia non erunt, ſi non omnis temporis fuerint. Filius itaque eſt qui ab initio judicavit, turrim ſuperbiſſimam elidens, linguaſque diſpertiens, orbem totum aquaram violentia puniens, pluens ſuper Sodomam et Gomorram ignem et ſulphurem; Dominus a Domino. Ipſe enim et ad humana colloquia ſemper deſcendit: ab Adam uſque ad patriarchas et prophetas; in viſione, in ſomnio, &c. &c." Tertullian. adverſus Praxeam, p. 509.

'*niſhed the whole globe by a deluge of waters*; *who* '*rained* upon Sodom and Gomorrha fire and 'brimſtone, the Lord from the Lord. *He it* '*was who always deſcended to converſe with man-*'*kind*; *from* Adam *down to the patriarchs and* '*prophets*; in viſions, by dreams, &c.'

This is a ſample of Tertullian's manner of proving his favourite points, by quoting ſcraps from different parts of ſcripture, and putting them together according to the ſound, and as they ſuited his preſent fancy and purpoſe, without any attention to what the writers intended: a method of interpreting the ſcriptures ſtill very common, and by which any abſurdity may be grafted upon them. When once a man of warm imagination, like Tertullian, perſuaded himſelf, that the preface of St. John's goſpel was intended to deſcribe Chriſt, as the *Word*, as a ſecond God, by whom all things were made: the reſt follows of courſe. Though neither Moſes, nor Solomon, nor any other of the ſacred writers, acknowleged themſelves, or repreſent any of the holy men whoſe hiſtory they give us, as having any the leaſt knowlege of ſuch a ſecond God, the *Word*; yet as it is taken for granted that he made all things, he muſt govern them too: and by ſetting the imagination to work, it is eaſily accompliſhed. This *new* God, the *Word*, the Son, is every thing. All communications to, and tranſactions with the

creatures are made by him. The ſovereign Lord and parent of all things becomes an idle ſpectator, who has nothing to do. But all this aëry fabric vaniſhes away, when brought to the teſt of common ſenſe, and the ſcriptures. One perſon only is there ſpoken of throughout, as being God; without any coadjutor, or repreſentative. And the worſhip of patriarchs and prophets, of Chriſt and of his apoſtles, is directed to this ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the ſupreme Father in heaven, and to no other beſides him.

SECTION XXI.

Of Euſebius's *copying of* Juſtin's *error concerning* Chriſt.

Euſebius, the juſtly celebrated eccleſiaſtical hiſtorian, a man of genius and extenſive learning, and polite writer, ſhall cloſe the liſt of the antients; of thoſe men, who very principally contributed to promote and carry on the deluſion, which he had received from thoſe that went before him, and which made Chriſt, the agent of the deity in the creation, and throughout the whole old Teſtament. Abating his fine ſtrains of eloquence, Euſebius will be found an exact copier of Juſtin, though he much improved and extended his heathen

heathen invention. Near the beginning of his eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, he thus launches out (*l*); *No language can be ſufficient to expreſs the race and ſplendor, the ſubſtance and nature of Chriſt. And hence it is, that the divine ſpirit ſaith in the prophecies*; Who ſhall declare his generation? *For as no* one knoweth the Father but the Son, ſo can no one know *the worth of* the Son but the Father. *For who but the Father can clearly comprehend that antemundane light, that intellectual and ſubſtantial Wiſdom before all ages, that living word, who was God with the Father in the beginning*, &c.

Unfortunately, the two paſſages (*m*) on which Euſebius builds theſe fine concluſions, give no ſupport to them whatſoever. For, as we have

 often

(*l*) Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. p. 4.

(*m*) How much Euſebius depended upon theſe two paſſages of ſcripture, whoſe meaning he ſo intirely miſtakes, appears from the manner in which he cites them together again in his *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, p. 216. 'But let others,' ſays he, 'put what value they pleaſe upon theſe things, I am 'ſatisfied with repeating over again, that true and pious de-'claration, (Iſaiah liii. 8.) *Who ſhall declare his generation?* 'And indeed the generation of the only-begotten Son of God, 'not only ſurpaſſes human comprehenſion, but the powers of 'all ſuperior natures. As our Lord and Saviour himſelf inti-'mates, when initiating his choſen diſciples into theſe myſte-'ries, Matt. xi. 27. *No man*, ſays he, *knoweth the Father, 'but the Son:* and immediately adds, *no one knoweth the Son, 'but the Father.*'

often a call to mention, the firſt, from Iſaiah, is a wrong tranſlation of the prophet's words, who ſpeaks not of Chriſt's *generation*, but of the men of *that generation*, by whom Chriſt was ſo cruelly treated. And in the other paſſage, Matt. xi. 27. he intirely miſtakes the meaning of Chriſt; who is not ſaying any thing of the nature of the Father, or of his own nature, but of the will of the ſupreme Father, of which he only was the depoſitary; and therefore none could be fully acquainted with it, but by communications from him.

Having next cited, in a ſolemn manner, John i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word*, &c. as teaching Chriſt to be a God, though far from it, as we have ſeen; Euſebius pompouſly goes on (*n*). ‘ *That* ‘ *great character*, Moſes *likewiſe*, *the moſt antient of* ‘ *all the prophets*, *when*, *by the divine ſpirit's inſpira-* ‘ *tion he deſcribed the creation*, *informs us*, *that* ‘ *the ſupreme artiſt and maker of the univerſe*, *gave* ‘ *to* Chriſt *his divine and firſt-born Word*, *the* ‘ *formation of inferior ſubſtances*, *and conſulted with* ‘ *him about man's creation*. Gen. i. 26. For he ‘ tells us, *God ſaid*, *let us make man after our* ‘ *image*, *in our likeneſs*. *And another of the pro-* ‘ *phets confirms this declaration*, *thus deifying* Chriſt ‘ *as the Word*, *in his hymns*: Pſal. xxxii. He ‘ ſpake, and they were made: he commanded, ‘ and they were created: *thus introducing the Fa-*

ther,

(*n*) Hiſt. Eccl. p. 5.

'*ther, and the creator, as the ſovereign Lord of*
'*all, giving his command with a royal nod; and*
'*the divine* Word, *ſecond in rank to the Father,*
'*him whom we preach to be the Chriſt, miniſtring*
'*and obedient to the Father's commands. Him,*
'(*viz.* Chriſt) *all that have been eminent for piety,*
'*and virtue, from the firſt formation of man,* Moſes
'*that famous ſervant of God, and before him,* Abra-
'ham *and his poſterity, and all righteous men and*
'*prophets ſince, beholding him with the pure eyes*
'*of the underſtanding, they have acknowleged,*
'*and paid him that worſhip,* which is due to the
'Son of God.'

This eloquent declamation wants nothing but truth to recommend it; this learned man having ſuffered himſelf to be impoſed upon, and impoſing upon others in it. For neither Moſes, nor Abraham, nor any of the prophets and righteous men, named in the ſcriptures, appear ever to have known, much leſs to have worſhiped, any ſuch inferior god and ſubordinate creator, as he deſcribes.

Euſebius then proceeds to give particular inſtances, (produced by Juſtin before him, in which he has been ſhewn ſadly to have miſunderſtood the ſacred writings,) of Chriſt's acting in this character of an inferior god. I ſhall content myſelf with barely mentioning them.—" That it was
'the *Word,* Chriſt, as miniſtring to the Father,
'who

'who appeared to Abraham, (Gen. xviii.) in the 'plains of Mamre: That Moſes evidently ſtiles 'him, Lord, next to the Father, when he ſays, 'Gen. xix. 24. *The Lord rained brimſtone and fire 'from the Lord:* That it was he that appeared 'to Joſhua, v. 13. 14; and from this paſſage, 'compared with Exod. iii. 5. 6, he endeavours 'to make it out, that it was he who ſaid to 'Moſes; *I am the God of thy Fathers*, &c.' and he concludes. in a moſt pompous ſtile, that Chriſt was that Word, and Wiſdom of God, who miniſtered to the Father and God of the univerſe in the formation of all creatures, as Wiſdom herſelf declared, Prov. viii. by the mouth of Solomon.

In Euſebius's *Preparatio Evangelica*, moſt of theſe texts are again (*o*) cited, and applied to Chriſt, as this great preexiſtent being, of Juſtin Martyr's firſt invention; together with other paſſages from the old Teſtament.

But in his other large work, his *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, he enters more minutely into the doctrine of the generation of Chriſt, the *Word*, as produced from God before the creation, and alſo as

(*o*) Ὁ μεν γε Μωσης διαρρηδην δυο θεολογει Κυριους, εν οις φησι, και εβρεξε Κυριος παρα Κυριου πυρ και θειον. *i. e.* Moſes expreſsly deifies two Lords (two Jehovahs) when he ſays; The Lord rained from the Lord fire and brimſtone.

Prep. Evang. p. 532.

as his inſtrument in making and governing the world. And in conſequence of his full perſuaſion of this imaginary preexiſtence of Chriſt, he never meets with the term, the *word*, or any thing of the kind, in the bible, but his imagination immediately transfers it to Chriſt.

And thus the ſuperior abilities of this moſt capable defender of the truth, were diverted from their proper and moſt beneficial channel in his valuable and uſeful writings; and employed in diſtorting the ſcriptures from their plain and natural ſenſe, to favour an imaginary dignity and high antiquity of our Saviour Chriſt; inſtead of diſplaying, what is of far more worth and excellence in any creature, his high office from God, to promote the virtue and eternal happineſs of mankind, and his own conſummate virtue, and benevolent labours and ſuffering unto death, in the accompliſhment of it.

SECTION

SECTION XXII.

Of the perverſion of the hebrew ſcriptures by theſe antient fathers, as they are called.

In the works of theſe eccleſiaſtical writers, and leaders of the chriſtian world, Juſtin, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian and Euſebius, all of them copiers after the firſt in reſpect of the ſubject of our inquiry; it is pronounced in the moſt deciſive terms, that God, together with his Word, the Son, are the prime authors of every thing throughout the univerſe; the Son, an inferior God, miniſtring to the ſupreme, and who is alſo repreſented as particularly appearing, and acting for him throughout the whole old Teſtament. And according to this idea, conſtructions intirely foreign to the thoughts of the ſacred writers, are put upon their words, and they are brought in teaching the exiſtence of this new God, now that they are dead, whom they themſelves never knew any thing of, when alive.

Juſtin, in his writings that remain, never cites the preface of St. John's goſpel, though he very frequently calls Chriſt, the logos, the *Word*. But all theſe other fathers hold Chriſt to be the *Word*, there ſpoken of, and build his divinity chiefly upon it. It has been, however, in the preceding ſheets, demonſtrated, may we not ſay; that this logos, *Word*, Wiſdom,

Wiſdom, is not a name of Chriſt, as a great per-exiſtent being, and ſecond God; but a name, or attribute of the Divine Being himſelf, as the jews underſtand concerning Wiſdom, as mentioned in Proverbs viii.

Theſe learned men nevertheleſs, carried away with this notion, find Chriſt throughout the old Teſtament, wherever the term, logos, *word*, occurs; and wherever God is ſaid to command any thing, they immediately fancy that he ſpeaks to Chriſt. Thus, to name no more inſtances, Euſebius (*p*) applies to Chriſt, Pſ. xxxiii. 9. *He ſpake, and it was done: he commanded, and they were created.* And Pſ. cvii. 20. *He ſent his word, and healed them, and they were delivered from their deſtructions.*

But if you turn to the reading of the ſacred books, without their comments, you find no ſuch two divine beings, to whom your regards are to be paid: no mention of any ſecond God, called the logos, the *Word*, *the Son.* The ſacred penmen knew nothing, teach nothing of the kind, whatever refinements learned men may make on their words, and whatever concluſions of their own they may draw from them.

Would any one, for example, but a man, like Euſebius, full of theſe philoſophic notions and prejudices about two Gods, a firſt and a ſecond, ever

(*p*) Hiſt. Eccl. p. 5. 6.

ever have found any but the Divine Being himſelf in the two paſſages juſt now produced from the Pſalms? In one of which, xxxiii. 9. the pſalmiſt beautifully deſcribes with what eaſe, as by a word's ſpeaking, the Almighty made the world, and accompliſhes all his purpoſes. And in Pſ. cvii. that he ſaves his creatures, when all other helps and remedies are ineffectual.

Never would this celebrated writer have found Chriſt, a ſecond God and creator, in any of the innumerable paſſages of ſcripture he has produced, if he had not been prepoſſeſſed beforehand with the idea. Interpret but the language of ſcripture, as common ſenſe dictates; as the hebrews, whoſe language it is, have in all times underſtood it: that God's word, wiſdom, ſpirit, by which he does every thing, is himſelf; as the word, wiſdom, ſpirit of a man, are the man himſelf; and an end will be put to this new ſecond God and creator, which theſe chriſtian fathers have palmed upon the world theſe fifteen hundred years; and thereby, to ſay no more of the miſchief they have cauſed, have hindered countleſs multitudes from embracing the goſpel.

SECTION

SECTION XXIII.

Of the influence of Juſtin's *character, and peremptory aſſertions, over ſome eminent modern chriſtians.*

We cannot wonder, that in the many dark ages that followed the time of Euſebius, when the civil power firſt interpoſed under the emperor Conſtantine, to eſtabliſh the belief of Chriſt's divinity by confiſcation and death, a law which has continued in all chriſtian countries, with greater or leſs ſeverity to this hour; that few ſhould dare to ſpeculate upon, and call in queſtion, what ſo many venerable fathers, as they are called, had ſettled, and which had the ſanction of ſuch awful authority. But one is ſurprized, that in the days of our fathers, the juſtly celebrated Dr. Clarke, who ventured openly to publiſh his diſſent from the doctrine of the Trinity by law eſtabliſhed, ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be dazzled by the authority and aſſertions of Juſtin, when he repeats with approbation the ſayings of this antient father, that 'the jews were reproved by the prophet Iſaiah 'and by Chriſt, for imagining that it was the 'father of the univerſe, who ſpake to Moſes, when 'it was indeed the Son of God, who is called 'the angel and meſſenger of the Father.' And again,

again, quoting thoſe other words of Juſtin; 'that 'the appearance, which Moſes ſaw, Exod. iii. 3. '—6. was both an angel and God; yet it was not 'God, the creator of the univerſe, which then ſaid 'to Moſes, that he was *the God of Abraham, the 'God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob*; but it was 'the perſon, whom he ſays, he had before ſhewed 'to have appeared to Abraham, and to Jacob, 'and at the judgment of Sodom, miniſtring to 'the will of the Father (*q*).'

How humiliating is it, and may well make all others modeſt, and diſtruſtful of themſelves, to ſee this eminently learned man, and able reaſoner, giving into the weak, unſupported conceit of a ſecond God, miniſtring to the ſupreme, which Juſtin imported from Plato's philoſophy into chriſtianity; and not able to diſcern the miſrepreſentation of thoſe paſſages of ſcripture alleged by this antient writer, but ſo blinded as to bring himſelf to believe, that the whole nation of the jews did not know who was the particular God, who ſpoke to Moſes, and delivered to them their law: nay, it might be added, that none of the nation ever knew it, from the beginning! For it has been made evident, that neither Moſes, nor any of the prophets, had any idea themſelves, or ever gave the remoteſt hint, that Jehovah, their God, had any perſon who was his repreſen-

(*q*) Dr. Clarke's Scripture doctrine of the Trinity. p. 121. 122. 3d. Edit.

repreſentative, or that acted for him; much leſs that it was one, who afterwards became man.

It is the more extraordinary, that Dr. Clarke ſhould fall under this deluſion, when our Lord never once mentions ſuch a character of inferior deity having been ſuſtained by himſelf from the beginning, or demanded any reſpect or worſhip on that account, which certainly would have been due to him; and alſo, that one ſo verſed in ſcripture, ſhould overlook ſo many paſſages of it, which expreſsly contradict any idea of the kind concerning Chriſt; particularly that above-noted, Acts iii. 13. where Jeſus is ſtiled *the ſervant of the God of Abraham, &c*; and therefore moſt aſſuredly could not be the God of Abraham himſelf.

After Dr. Clarke, followed in our own day, and a very few years ago only taken away from us, the laſt learned man, I truſt, that will ever ſupport a doctrine ſo peculiarly diſcountenanced by the ſcripture, having ſcarce any ſhadow of argument but what ariſes from its miſtaken phraſeology.

Benjamin Ben Mordecai, *otherwiſe* the late ingenious, and moſt worthy, Henry Taylor, Rector of Crawley, Hants, undertook very particularly the maintenance of this opinion, firſt invented by Juſtin; and attempted to prove, that Chriſt, being the *Word*, mentioned in the preface of St. John's goſpel, *by whom all things were made*; was the

miniſtring angel, or agent of Jehovah, the true God from the beginning; his inſtrument, employed by him in the creation, and his conſtant repreſentative upon earth; that he appeared to Adam, and to the patriarchs; that he was the giver of the law; and that he it was, who was worſhiped, in the tabernacle, and in the temple, as the ſubſtitute of the true God; and afterwards became man.

This was going through with the matter, without reſerve. It will not however be needful for me to ſay any thing concerning this ſtrange doctrine, which no jew ever found in their bible, as in another place (*r*), ſome few years ſince, I endeavoured to refute all that has been advanced on the ſubject by this valuable writer; who, in other reſpects, hath deſerved ſo well of the literary, and chriſtian world.

(*r*) A Sequel to an Apology for reſigning the vicarage of Catterick. p. 294—386.

SECTION

SECTION XXIV.

Of the dazzling plea from antiquity, in favour of this notion of Juſtin *concerning* Chriſt.

When perſons, who have not had leiſure to conſider the ſubject, are told of a long liſt of learned men, nearly from the days of the apoſtles, holding this particular doctrine of Chriſt being a perſon ſpoken of by Moſes, as next to God, and the ſubordinate creator of the world under him; and have had this idea of Chriſt inſtilled into them from their youth; their underſtanding and ſenſes are quite overpowered with ſuch a preſumed glare of evidence, that oftentimes they will not hear of any thing offered againſt it: deeming it impoſſible, that learned men, ſo many of them, and for ſo many ages, ſhould have been miſtaken in a matter of ſo great importance.

But if they would give themſelves the trouble to reflect and inquire a little, the moſt unlearned might ſee and be ſatisfied, that there is nothing of ſolidity, that ſhould weigh with any one, in the argument ariſing from the great number of perſons, who for ſo long a courſe of years, have embraced this opinion.

For it has been amply proved, that it is not the doctrine of the ſcriptures; but had it's origin from a heathen convert to chriſtianity, about the year 140, who brought the notion from his philoſophy,

and grafted it upon the bible; and who deceived himſelf, by fondly imagining that he was inſpired with a ſagacity from God, enabling him to diſcover Chriſt to have been mentioned by Moſes, and in the Old Teſtament, as the agent of God in the creation of the world, and his repreſentative afterwards in the government of it. And a doctrine of this kind being laid down with warm zeal, as a revelation from God himſelf, coming from a truly pious man, in the very next age to the apoſtles, impoſed upon many; and being thus at firſt received as the ſcripture itſelf, and handed down implicitly from age to age, it in time became the almoſt univerſal belief.

So that inſtead of ſaying with Dr. Clarke (*s*), that 'it is the unanimous opinion of all antiquity, 'that Chriſt was the perſon, who ſaid to Moſes, 'Exod. iii. 6. *I am the God of thy fathers, the* 'the God of Abraham, &c. and who ſpake and 'acted from the beginning, in the name and per-'ſon of the inviſible Father:'

It would be more juſtly and truly ſaid; that it was originally the fond preſumption, and conceit, of one well-meaning, but miſtaken man, that Moſes and Solomon make mention of Chriſt, as an inferior God, miniſtring to the ſupreme father of the univerſe: which was taken up on his authority,

(*s*) Scripture Doctrine, &c. p. 121.

rity, by the (*t*) learned only at firſt: but ſpreading by degrees through their influence, and aided afterwards by the civil power, this doctrine of a ſecond god pervaded all ranks of chriſtians: and as ſuperſtition knows not where to ſtop, in no long courſe of time, from looking upon Chriſt, according to Juſtin's fanciful ſuppoſition, as an inferior god, they began to make him equal to the infinite (*u*) and eternal Being: as is the public profeſſion concerning him, to this day, throughout chriſtendom.

(*t*) All the learned chriſtians of that time were far from favouring Juſtin's new doctrine of Chriſt being a ſecond God, ſpoken of in the hebrew ſcriptures. Many, whoſe names are recorded, with numberleſs others unknown, continued to hold him to be a human being, with extraordinary powers from God. And it has been amply proved, that whilſt Juſtin, and the philoſophic chriſtians after him, indulged themſelves in their unſcriptural ſpeculations, concerning the logos, the *Word*, as the Son of God before all time, and his eternal generation: ordinary chriſtians, of plain underſtanding, kept cloſe to the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning Chriſt, as being a man of the jewiſh nation, and the Son of God in no other ſenſe, than that of having received his being, and extraordinary favours and communications from God

(*u*) Concerning the exact period when this great corruption took place among chriſtians, ſee Dr. Prieſtley's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, vol. ii. ſect. iii. p. 324, &c. a work neceſſary for every one, who would obtain a true knowlege of many important things concerning Chriſt's religion.

And the fatal example and precedent of this one well-meaning man bringing this lamentable polytheiſm into the chriſtian church, which ſtill continues, and has laſted for ſo many ages, may be a warning to all chriſtians, to beware of fixing notions and doctrines of their own upon the ſcriptures, inſtead of carefully examining the declarations of the prophets, of Chriſt, and his apoſtles, what it was that they really taught concerning God and Chriſt, and teaching and adhering to that only.

SECTION XXV.

Of Juſtin's *Character.*

From Juſtin Martyr, therefore, ye ſtudious youth, though living ſo very near the time of the apoſtles, you cannot learn the right method of interpreting the ſcriptures, or a juſt knowlege of the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt; to what claſs of beings he belonged, human, or divine: for his philoſophy had led him ſadly wrong in both theſe reſpects.

But he will teach you piety, probity, a juſt government of your paſſions, an ardent love of truth, and to refuſe no pains to attain, and to recommend it to others.

In all his writings I have not obſerved one proud, conceited thought. He never appears ſtudious to ſet himſelf off for any thing; deſirous only to bring men

men to virtue and to the goſpel. Where he happens to ſpeak in ſuch a high tone, and takes upon him to cenſure the jews for their ignorance of their own ſcriptures; it was becauſe he believed himſelf inſpired. So that it is not the air and boaſt of a vain man, but of an honeſt enthuſiaſt.

The benevolence of his mind is moſt conſpicuous every where, in his labours to bring all men out of the darkneſs and miſeries of vice, and idolatry, to the knowlege of the ſupreme creator and father of the univerſe.

So far from ſaying any thing againſt thoſe who believed Chriſt to be a human creature only, when ſpeaking of them, he ſeems rather to apologize *(r)* for the novelty of his own opinions. Very different in this from Euſebius the eccleſiaſtical hiſtorian, who coming near two centuries after him, when the doctrine of Chriſt's preexiſtence and divinity was grown old, and eſtabliſhed and ſupported by the ſecular powers, gives way to much angry abuſe and calumny againſt thoſe who denied it. And who, on account of his violent prejudices, is to be read with caution when he pronounces concerning the perſon of Chriſt, or ſpeaks of unitarians.

Juſtin moreover, although fatally miſtaken in this one point, well underſtood, and has given a juſt exhibition of the ſublime morality of the goſpel, and every where ſhews that he had imbibed the ſpirit of it. And, in thoſe times of fiery trial,

he ſtood forth in defence of our religion, by maintaining in his writings its excellence, and the innocence of its profeſſors, and by boldly remonſtrating to the emperors on their injuſtice to their chriſtian ſubjects; and at laſt nobly gave up his life for it in the cauſe of the goſpel.

(r) I would here refer to the famous paſſage in Juſtin's dialogue with Trypho the jew, of which there is a tranſlation, with remarks, in an Examination of Mr. Robinſon of Cambridge's Plea for Chriſt's Divinity, p. 192, 193.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER III.

INTRODUCTION.

The teſtimony of all the apoſtles concerning the DIVINE UNITY, *and the character and condition of their lord and maſter Jeſus Chriſt, as being entirely one of the human race. The cauſe of the early falling away of chriſtians from this doctrine of the apoſtles. The plainneſs of this doctrine concerning* GOD *and* Chriſt, *as laid down in the ſcripture. A rule by which every one may be able to decide for himſelf concerning it. By following this rule many chriſtians became* unitarians *at the beginning of the reformation, and many are now returning to the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning God and Chriſt. This happy effect will ſtill more be ſeen, when one great impediment is removed, by having the ſcriptures fairly laid before them in the mother-tongue.*

I.

IN the firſt chapter of this work, there has been an examination of every thing related concerning the perſon of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by the four hiſtorians of his life, Matthew, Mark, Luke,

Luke, and John, which can be ſuppoſed to refer to any prior exiſtence which he poſſeſſed before he became man; and alſo a very minute analyſis of all the paſſages in St. Luke's ſecond treatiſe, *The Acts*, tending to exhibit a juſt idea of what his apoſtles thought and taught concerning him in that reſpect, after his reſurrection.

The other writers likewiſe of the new Teſtament have come in review before us, and their ſentiments concerning our Saviour have been inquired into; to what claſs of beings he belonged: whether he was God, or only his creature?

And we have found it to be the ſentiment of *all* the penmen of the New Teſtament, and of *all* the characters recorded and brought forward by them;

1. That there is one Being only, the Father, who is the true God, and to be worſhiped; the ſingle perſon of him who is the God, and Father of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all mankind; the ſole creator, and ſovereign lord of all. And

2. That Jeſus Chriſt was nothing more than a man, born, and bred in Judea; a prophet, and meſſenger of the moſt high God, and teacher of his will to mankind.

But as many, who acknowlege that Chriſt was a human being, contend alſo that before that, he had an exiſtence in heaven; we have examined all that language of our Lord, concerning himſelf, on which this notion of his preexiſtence is chiefly founded;

founded; *viz. his coming down from heaven, coming forth from the Father, being ſent from God, having been before Abraham; having had glory with the Father before the world was;* and we have diſcovered from the explanation given by our Lord himſelf of this language; that it did not relate to any being that he had in another world, but to the dignity and office intended for him, and which he received from God, in this world.

This has been proved to be our Lord's meaning in ſuch phraſes, by all juſt rules of criticiſm, and fair interpretation. And it is alſo in perfect agreement with his general ſtile concerning himſelf, *viz.* that he was one whom *the Father had ſent*; his meſſenger.

It is too remarkable a circumſtance to be paſſed over unnoticed, that this doctrine concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being intirely one of the human race, is moſt extraordinarily confirmed by St. Luke in *The Acts*, where that hiſtorian exhibits continually, and moſt diſtinctly, the ſentiments of the apoſtles concerning their lord and maſter Jeſus; and the manner in which they ſpoke of him, and preached his religion, to jews and heathens, after his reſurrection.

Here we ſometimes find one apoſtle (Acts ii. 14. 22.) in the name of the reſt; ſometimes two of them (iii. 13. 14.) ſeparately; at another time all the apoſtles joined together in an act of ſolemn worſhip, and declaring (iv. 24—30.) God to be one

one ſingle perſon, God by himſelf alone, the ſovereign Lord of all; and Jeſus, a creature of the human race, and of their own nation, his ſervant.

Nay, for this laſt, we have not only the teſtimony of *all* the apoſtles; but alſo of Chriſt himſelf, ſpeaking from heaven; declaring himſelf to have been originally, and of courſe, ſtill to be, only a human being. I AM JESUS OF NAZARETH. Acts xxii. 8.

In the ſame book, *The Acts*, it has alſo appeared, that St. Paul (xvii. 24. 31.) very expreſsly teaches the Athenians, that the Divine Being, God, was the creator of all things; and that Jeſus Chriſt was a human creature, highly honoured and diſtinguiſhed by him. Whence it follows, unleſs you would make him contradict himſelf, that when the ſame apoſtle, in his epiſtles, ſpeaks of all things being *created* by Jeſus Chriſt, it is to be underſtood, not of the original creation of the world, but of a creation of another kind, the new creation or reformation of the world by the goſpel: which has alſo been ſhewn by learned men to have been what the apoſtle alone intended, whenever he ſpeaks of a creation in which Chriſt was concerned.

Now all this ſurely is ſufficient for our ſatisfaction, who, and what manner of perſon and of what condition Chriſt was: *viz.* the teſtimony of all his

his apoſtles, the teſtimony of himſelf; that he was in his origin, and ſtill continued to be, one of the human ſpecies.

II.

But as many have been impoſed upon, ſo as to imagine that the apoſtles themſelves held the pre-exiſtence of Chriſt, becauſe that doctrine came into the chriſtian church ſo very early; it ſeemed to me expedient and proper, after having proved, as above, what the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning their maſter Jeſus, was, to point out when chriſtians began to deviate from it, and to make him a different being from what the apoſtles taught him to be.

And I truſt, that it has been made clearly to appear from its proper evidence, in the ſecond chapter of this work, that this heathen doctrine of more Gods than one, took its riſe from heathen philoſophers, who embraced the goſpel at its very firſt preaching, and who brought in with them their notions of one ſupreme, and of many inferior gods, and maintained Jeſus Chriſt to have been one of theſe latter ſecondary deities. And moreover, a ſeries of proofs have been produced, that Juſtin Martyr, was the principal, if not the ſole author of this polytheiſtic ſyſtem; in which he has been followed, though with large improvements upon him, to the preſent times.

It

It was no difficult matter to ſhew the futility of this good man's pretenſions to inſpiration upon this ſubject; and the weakneſs of his arguments, where he would draw in Moſes and Solomon as vouchers of his new doctrine, which made Chriſt, under the character of the logos, the *Word*, a ſubordinate god and creator, miniſtring to the ſupreme Father of the univerſe, before he became man. For there is not the leaſt trace in their writings, as hath been ſhewn, that Moſes or Solomon had any idea that there was any ſuch perſon exiſting as Chriſt; or that there was any God, or creator, but JEHOVAH.

III.

This doctrine of the Divine Unity, and of Chriſt being altogether one of the human ſpecies, raiſed up among the jews to ſerve the extraordinary purpoſes of the divine providence and favour to mankind; is ſo plainly legible in every page of the bible, where God and Chriſt are mentioned; that if you can bring perſons to take their opinions from that book, and not to force it to ſpeak only what they have learned before from their nurſes and prieſts, the ſpell of ſuperſtition and polytheiſm is broken, and the important point ſettled: GOD will be found throughout the ſcriptures to be ONE in the ſtricteſt ſenſe; Jeſus Chriſt, only his honoured ſervant, and meſſenger to mankind, favoured above

others

others for his eminent virtues; and the Spirit, or holy Spirit, will be plainly diſcovered to be nothing but the divine and extraordinary power, imparted to Jeſus and his followers, during that firſt age of our religion, in order to prove that it came from God; and to qualify them to teach it with effect to the world.

IV.

It has been often found, and has been particularly exemplified above, in the caſe of that good man and eminent preacher of the goſpel, Dr. Watts; that plainly as the doctrine of the Divine Unity is delivered in the ſacred writings, many ſincere chriſtians are prevented from ſeeing it, through the ſtrong biaſs, which their early education has put upon their minds in the wrong interpretation of certain phraſes and paſſages, which they could not get over, nor emancipate themſelves from their former prejudices, ſo as to exerciſe their judgments freely in inquiry, whether there are three divine perſons, each of them God, or one perſon only who is God.

But there is a method of inquiry, and way of reaſoning upon the queſtion, which is level to all capacities; and which, if men could be free to uſe it, would enable them to arrive at certainty in this intricate matter, (an intricacy however of chriſtians own making, whereas it is far from

from being ſuch in itſelf); and to decide without fear or ſcruple, for themſelves. And it is this.

It may be aſſumed as a maxim, which cannot be controverted; that a doctrine of ſuch importance as that which relates to the Being that made us, and whom we are to worſhip, whether it be one perſon, one intelligent agent, or conſiſting of two or three ſuch perſons; cannot depend upon one or two particular paſſages of ſcripture, eſpecially ſuch as are doubtful and obſcure; but muſt be what is apparent throughout the whole, wherever the name of God occurs, and be every where plain and intelligible to the ordinary plowman, who makes uſe of his underſtanding, as to the greateſt ſcholar.

Now if you apply this rule to the doctrine of the Divine Unity, to there being one God only, one in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, one perſon: you find this to be the moſt plain and evident, in every page of the ſacred writings, where the Divine Being is mentioned. For always, ſome one of the ſingular pronouns, *I*, *thou*, *he*, *me*, *thee*, *him*, are uſed concerning that ineffable and peerleſs majeſty; which *demonſtrate* the point, to every ſound underſtanding, that God is one ſingle perſon, beyond the poſſibility of confutation; and neceſſarily exclude Jeſus Chriſt, and every other perſon whatſoever, from being God.

But

But with reſpect to the *Trinity*, as it is called; to there being *Three Divine Perſons*, who are each of them God, and to be adored, by diſtinct perſonal invocations, God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Ghoſt; there is not one book of the OLD Teſtament, wherein a man of a plain unprejudiced underſtanding, could find, that there were any more perſons than one, or any other than the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, who was God, and to be worſhiped.

The far greater part of the books of the NEW Teſtament can not be ſaid to hold forth an idea of any ſuch three divine perſons and their worſhip; ſpeaking expreſsly of one perſon only, who was God, and to be worſhiped; ſo that we muſt neceſſarily infer, that the ſacred writers of theſe books knew nothing of ſuch three divine perſons, but of one only.

And there are but three paſſages of thoſe uſually alleged, that can with any ſhadow of pretence, faint as it is, be ſaid to favour this doctrine of a Trinity, or of three divine perſons, each of which is God.

The firſt is, Matth. xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit.* 'That is *(a)*, go ye therefore into all the world, 'and teach, or diſciple all nations, baptiſing them into

(a) This is Dr. Lardner's Paraphraſe. Letter on the Logos, p. 119.

'into the poſſeſſion of faith in, and an obligation 'to obey, the doctrine taught by Chriſt, with au- 'thority from God the Father, and confirmed 'by the holy Spirit, *viz.* the miraculous powers 'imparted to Chriſt and his apoſtles."

This has been ſhewn above to have been all that our Lord intended by this baptiſmal form: ſo that he was intirely unacquainted with the doctrine of a Trinity, although his followers have made him a part of it.

St. Paul's pious farewel ſalutation to the chriſtians at Corinth, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. is another paſſage much reſted upon, as teaching the doctrine of three divine perſons. The words of the original ought to be thus rendered *(b)*. *The grace*, or favour *of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the participation of the holy Spirit be with you all.* And by the holy Spirit, of which the apoſtle wiſhed them to be partakers, he aſſuredly intended no divine perſon, but the divine gifts and powers at that period diſpenſed to believers, and neceſſary in general, for the eſtabliſhment of the goſpel in the world.

The grace or favour of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is nothing more than an uſual phraſe to ſignify the bleſſings of the goſpel, the favour of God, of which we have the moſt perfect aſſurance by Jeſus Chriſt.

(b) See Commentaries and Eſſays by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the Scriptures. Vol. i. p. 134, &c.

Chriſt. In a more abridged way of writing, our apoſtle ſtiles it *grace* or favour alone. As Coloſſ. iv. 18. *Grace be with you.* When the love of God is added to it, as here, it ſignifies that grace, or favour of God, which proceedeth from his love to mankind, and was revealed to us by Chriſt.

The other paſſage of ſcripture, and the only one which can be brought for any ſhew or ſemblance of proof of a Trinity in Unity, of three perſons being one God, is 1 John v. 7. *For there are three that bear record* [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit: and theſe three are one. And there are three that bear witneſs on earth] *the ſpirit, and the water, and the blood: and theſe three agree in one.* But the words within crotchets are generally acknowleged to be ſpurious, by all the learned who have any regard for their characters, as ſcholars; and therefore being not a part of ſcripture, or of the apoſtle's writing, cannot be alleged as a proof of any thing to a chriſtian.

TRY now farther this rule of ſound and juſt reaſoning with reſpect to Jeſus Chriſt being God, as you have done with reſpect to the Trinity.

All the writers, and all the characters introduced, in the OLD Teſtament, know not any ſuch God or divine perſon, as Jeſus Chriſt; ſpeak of no perſon as God but one, JEHOVAH, the maker of heaven and earth. And where any thing is ſaid by the prophets concerning Chriſt, he is al-

ways mentioned as a human being, and favoured ſervant of God, that was in ſome future time to be raiſed up by him, to ſerve his great deſigns for the whole human race.

It has alſo been particularly and fully proved in the firſt chapter of this work, that all the writers of the new Teſtament and all the apoſtles, held their lord, and maſter, Jeſus, to be nothing more than one of mankind, and the highly diſtinguiſhed meſſenger and ſervant of the ſupreme Father, and ſovereign Lord of all; and moreover, that this was the conſtant language of Jeſus concerning himſelf; thoſe few paſſages wherein he ſpeaks of his *coming down from heaven* and the like, having been ſhewn not to refer to any former ſtate in which he had lived, but to denote his dignity and office from God in the preſent world. But even ſuppoſing they could not ſatisfactorily be proved to have this ſignification, ſtill we ought to be determined by the general tenor and language of the ſcriptures, and not by a few obſcure phraſes. And this is an evidence of the Divine Unity, and of the bleſſed Jeſus being only the creature, the ſervant, the meſſenger of God to mankind, by which the unlearned may abide in oppoſition to all the ſubtleties, and difficulties which men vainly wiſe would raiſe about the different meaning of particular words and phraſes, and therein entangle themſelves and others; and may aſſure

aſſure themſelves that the heavenly Father would not leave a ſubject of ſuch conſequence, as relates to his own unrivalled majeſty, and incommunicable glory, and perfections, to be decided by ſuch niceties, but by proofs which every capacity may ſee clearly, and be perfectly ſatisfied with them.

V.

It was by taking their opinions from the ſcriptures only, that at the beginning of the reformation, before Socinus or Socinians were heard of, many plain men of good underſtandings, and honeſt inquiring minds, without learning, became Unitarians. And that this plain, ſelf-evident doctrine of the Divine Unity, ſelf evident, I mean, to every unprejudiced reader of the ſcriptures, would have gone on to ſpread itſelf by the powerful force of truth and zeal of its profeſſors, and have brought over the learned to it in a courſe of time, cannot be doubted, if it had not met with that moſt barbarous oppoſition, which it is not ordinarily in the power of human nature to withſtand; and which might even have extinguiſhed the goſpel at the firſt preaching, if it had been poſſible. I mean, the burning its noble martyrs and confeſſors alive, or burying them out of ſight in loathſome priſons, which is far more cruel and ſavage, and more fatal and adverſe to the ſpreading of the truth, by ſuppreſſing mens glorious teſtimony to it, under the moſt horrible torments.

So early as the year 1550, ſays that faithful hiſtorian Mr. Strype *(c)*; 'Arianiſm now ſhewed 'itſelf ſo openly, and was in ſuch danger of ſpread-'ing farther, that it was thought neceſſary to ſup-'preſs it by uſing more rugged methods than 'ſeemed agreeable to the merciful principles of 'the goſpel.'

The ſufferings alſo of the anabaptiſts amongſt us in this cauſe, at that time, are well known; particularly of thoſe unfortunate men, who having fled from the Spaniſh perſecution in Flanders, were burnt to death here by the unrelenting order of Q. Elizabeth. But the relation of the manner, in which two of them were executed, given by Brandt, is ſo calculated to inſpire a juſt horror of ſuch cruelties; and that valuable hiſtorian's own remarks upon it, ſo well teach the iniquity of all violation of men's conſciences, and of doing the leaſt injury to them, on account of their religious opinions, that I ſhall inſert it at length.

'At laſt, ſays Brandt, on the 22d of July, '1574, the two oldeſt of the priſoners, *John Peter-'ſon* and *Henry Terwoordt*, notwithſtanding great 'application

(c) Strype's Eccleſiaſtical Memorials, vol. ii. p. 214.—One is ſorry to obſerve that Cranmer, Latimer, and Taylor, and others, who were burnt to death in the next reign, were in the commiſſion to try and puniſh theſe innocent perſons. Id. ibid. p. 246.

'application was made for pardon by many of 'the moſt diſcreet, godly, and learned of the 'Engliſh and Dutch nations, were executed in '*Smithfield*, a place where the *reformed* uſed to 'be treated in the like manner, being both of 'them burnt to aſhes at the ſame ſtake, without 'gunpowder or ſtrangling. They died with great 'terror, ſhrieks, and groans. It is reported of 'one of them, that he cried out (*d*) *I acknowlege 'that Jeſus is the Chriſt, God and man, and born 'of Mary according to the fleſh*, or ſomewhat to 'this purpoſe; inſomuch that had he not been 'almoſt conſumed, they would have ſaved his 'life. The oldeſt, *John Peterſon*, was a poor man 'fifty years old, with nine children: his firſt wife 'had been burnt at *Gent* for her religion, and 'he was now married to another woman, whoſe 'firſt huſband was likewiſe burnt on the ſame ac- 'count. Theſe things had been fully repreſented 'to the biſhop (of *London*, *Grindal*,) and the man 'had petitioned for leave to depart with his wife 'and children; but all in vain. This ſeverity, 'which was not the firſt that had been practiſed in '*England*, ſince the *reformation*, appeared to many

(*d*) This ſhews that the men ſuffered chiefly for not thinking ſo highly of Chriſt, as their perſecutors required them to do. But the extremity of torture might make the poor creature confeſs any thing, and acknowlege the greateſt contradictions. For aſſuredly the ſcorching flames could bring no light or conviction to the mind.

'*proteſtants*, who were ſtill under the croſs in '*Flanders* and *Brabant*, both ſtrange and incre-'dible. They lamented that thoſe, who not long 'before had been perſecuted themſelves, were 'now harraſſing others for the ſake of their re-'ligion, and offering violence with fire and ſword 'to the conſciences of other men, though they 'had before taught, and that with great truth; '*that it did not belong to any mortal man to lord it* '*over the conſciences of others: that faith was* '*the gift of God, and not to be implanted in the* '*minds of men by any external force, but by the* '*word of God, and illumination of the holy Spirit*; '*that hereſy was not a carnal, but a ſpiritual* '*crime, and to be puniſhed by God alone: that* '*error and falſhood was not to be overcome with* '*violence, but truth: that the obligation which the* '*children of God lie under, is not to put others to* '*death for the faith, but to die themſelves, in bear-*'*ing witneſs to the truth. Laſtly, that the ſhed-*'*ding of blood for the ſake of religion is a mark of* 'ANTICHRIST, *who thereby ſets himſelf in the* '*judgment ſeat of God, aſſuming to himſelf the do-*'*minion over conſcience, which belongs to none but* '*God only*.' Brandt's Hiſtory of the Reformation in the Low Countries, vol. i. p. 315.

But

VI.

But although it was a work of ſeveral centuries to bring off plain ordinary chriſtians, who for a long time adhered to the ſcriptures and to the practice of the apoſtles, from the doctrine of the Divine Unity, to believe a Trinity, and the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt; it will not now require ſuch length of time, under the bleſſing of divine providence, to bring them back to this grand truth of the bible; now that the art of printing has made books ſo cheap, and ſo many are able to read.

And eſpecially rapid is and will be the recovery of this *long loſt truth*, and firſt article of the religion, both of nature, and revelation, that there is but one God, one perſon, who is God, and no other beſides HIM; ſince, notwithſtanding the laws in force, there is no danger of their being put in execution againſt thoſe who profeſs a diſbelief of the Trinity, and who maintain, that neither Jeſus, nor any other perſon is God, or to be worſhiped, but the Father of the univerſe alone.

Nay, we may add, that the doctrine of the Divine Unity is becoming creditable, upon ſo many obſerving and ſeeing, that there is ſo much to be ſaid for it, and ſo little for a multiplication of objects of worſhip, ſave the authority of high eccleſiaſtical

eccleſiaſtical dignities, and great churches, which weigh nothing in the balance againſt the truth.

There is one obſtacle however, in the way of common chriſtians, which hinders them from ſo eaſily arriving at the truth; *viz.* the *falſe readings* of the ſcripture ſtill kept up unamended, and the *miſtranſlations* of our engliſh bible; which, both together, are a very chief ſupport of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the divinity of Chriſt.

Being perſuaded then, that many learned, as well as unlearned, among us, are unacquainted with the true ſtate of the ſacred text, eſpecially of the New Teſtament, with regard to the ſubject of our inquiry, as it has been recovered and reſtored by the indefatigable labours of Mill, Bengelius, Wetſtein, and Grieſbach laſt of all, but not leaſt to be honoured, on account of his ſingular integrity; and perceiving that few attend to the wrong tranſlations of the bible in our mother-tongue, I ſhall hope to do an acceptable ſervice, in both theſe reſpects, by what follows.

Falſe

Falſe readings, or alterations of the words of ſcripture, in favour of a Trinity of divine perſons, *and eſpecially of* the divinity of Chriſt, *made with deſign, or through miſtake, by copyiſts or tranſcribers, before the art of printing was invented.*

Acts xx. 28.

Falſe reading.	St. Luke's *own words.*
—feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.	*—feed the church of the Lord,* (viz. Chriſt) *which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.*

So the beſt and moſt antient manuſcript copies of the New Teſtament have it; and it is thus cited by the moſt antient chriſtian authors.

1 Cor. xv. 47.

Falſe reading.	St. Paul's *own words.*
The ſecond man is the Lord *from heaven.*	*The ſecond man is from heaven.*

Ο Κυριος, the Lord, is omitted in ſome of the beſt antient manuſcripts; in the Coptic, Æthiopic, Vulgate, and Italian verſions, and by many antient fathers.

Eph.

Epheſians iii. 9.

Falſe reading.	St. Paul's *own words.*
— *the* myſtery, *which hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.*	— *the myſtery which hath been hid in God, who created all things.*

Mr. Locke, upon the place, hath well ſhewn; that if the words, *by Jeſus Chriſt*, be retained, it is nevertheleſs, of the *new* creation, or the happy change made in the manners of mankind by the goſpel, that the apoſtle ſpeaks; and not of the natural production of all things. But ſee a little tract on this paſſage, and on *the creation of all things* by Jeſus Chriſt, publiſhed by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the Scriptures.

Epheſians iii. 19.

Falſe reading.	St. Paul's *own words.*
— *to know the love* (*e*) *of Chriſt*, which paſſeth knowlege.	— *to know* the ſurpaſſing love of the knowlege of Chriſt.

This

(*e*) The myſtery, ſpoken of in this chapter, is the ſecret purpoſe of God, revealed by Chriſt, concerning the calling of the heathen world to the knowlege of the goſpel, and to eternal life; and the apoſtle devoutly prays, that the Epheſian

This is the reading of the Alexandrian manuſcript. So alſo Jerom and Auſtin cite it. See Grieſbach upon the place, who ſcruples not to adopt this reading into the text, as the true one.

1 Timothy iii. 16.

Falſe reading.	St. Paul's *own words.*
And without controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs; God was manifeſt in the fleſh, &c.	*And without controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs,* which or who *was manifeſt in the fleſh.*

It

ſian chriſtians might be impreſſed with a proper ſenſe of ſo immenſe a benefit, and might *know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowlege.* Now this, even according to the common reading, ſignifies not here any *perſonal* love of Chriſt to us, (although doubtleſs it is in other places juſtly ſpoken of) but the love of God to us, manifeſted by Chriſt: in the ſame manner as the apoſtolic ſalutation, *the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all,* does not mean any particular favour or grace of Chriſt himſelf to us, but the grace and favour of God revealed by him. But this meaning of the apoſtle, is ſtill made more plain and apparent by the true order and conſtruction of the words here reſtored. Vorſtius conjectured, that there had been ſuch a tranſpoſal of the words, and has this judicious note upon it. In his verbis trajectio eſſe poteſt, quaſi dicat apoſtolus, excellentem Dei charitatem, in ipſa Chriſti cognitione quæ nobis contigit, elucere. *viz.* that the exceeding love of God ſhone forth in the knowlege of Chriſt

'It has been a great controverſy among learned 'men, whether Θεος, *God*, or ος, *who*, or ο *which* 'be the true reading in this place. All the old 'verſions have it *qui*, *who*, or *quod*, *which*. And '*all* the antient fathers, though the copies of 'many of them have it now in the text itſelf, 'Θεος, *Deus*, *God*; yet from the tenor of their 'comments upon it, and from their never citing 'it in the arian controverſy, it appears they al-'ways read it *qui*, *who*, or *quod*, *which*; till the 'time of Macedonius, under the emperor Ana-'ſtaſius, in the beginning of the ſixth century. 'Of the two paſſages cited to the contrary by 'the learned Dr. Mill, in his appendix; *that* 'from Juſtin Martyr does not prove he did, 'but rather that he did not, read it Θεος, *God*; 'and *that* from Athanaſius, is out of a book 'acknowleged to be ſpurious. *Note*; it muſt 'not be judged from the preſent copies of the 'text, in Nyſſen and others, but from their man-'ner of commenting upon the place, how the text 'was

Chriſt which he had given us. Mr. Locke paraphraſes the words; 'to underſtand the exceeding love of God in bring-ing us to the knowlege of Chriſt. And in Tomſon's New Teſtament there is this note—*the love of Chriſt*; i. e. the love which God hath ſhewed us in Chriſt. I have dwelled the longer on this text, becauſe a miſapprehenſion of it hath led ſome to conclude, that Chriſt muſt have been of a nature ſuperior to man.

'was read in their days. In the days of Julian, 'when that emperor aſſerted, that *neither Mat-* '*thew, Mark, Luke, nor Paul, ever ventured to* '*ſtile Chriſt, God*; it is plain from Cyril's anſwer 'to the aſſertion of Julian, that even at that time 'the word ὁ Θεὸς, God, was not found in this 'text.' Dr. Clarke, Scr. Doct. of Trinity. 88. 89. Grieſbach has a long and excellent note upon this place, in his New Teſtament. Dr. Lardner has ſhewn, in a diſcourſe upon this paſſage of ſcripture, that if it be read, *God manifeſt in the fleſh*, there is nothing in the phraſe inconſiſtent with the doctrine of the Divine Unity.

1 John iii. 16.

Falſe reading.	*The apoſtle's own words.*
Hereby perceive we the love of God, *becauſe he laid down his life for us.*	*Hereby perceive we love, becauſe he laid down his life for us.*

The words, *of God*, are omitted in the Alexandrian and royal Pariſian, and other manuſcripts; in many printed editions of the greek Teſtament, and left out of the text, by Mill, Bengelius, Wetſtein, Grieſbach.

1 John v. 7. 8.

Falſe reading.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one. And there are three that bear witneſs on earth, *the ſpirit, and the water, and the blood: and theſe three agree in one.*

St. John's *own words.*

For there are three that bear record; the ſpirit, the water, and the blood: and theſe three agree in one.

This moſt juſtly exploded verſe is not found in any greek manuſcript of the New Teſtament, of which we have ſo many preſerved, both in public and private libraries, except in one written in the 15th or 16th century *(f)*.

It is wanting in both the ſyriac verſions of the New Teſtament, though it has crept into ſome printed

(f) With reſpect to Valla's, and Stephens's manuſcripts, which ſome have lately much inſiſted on, Wetſtein has ſhewn it to be uncertain whether Valla was poſſeſſed of any greek or latin manuſcript which contained this verſe of the *three witneſſes*. He has alſo proved, that of the ſeven manuſcripts only, which Stephens had, the whole of the verſe of the *three witneſſes* was wanting in five of them. And the other two manuſcripts have never yet been found.

printed editions of the ſyriac; and is alſo wanting in all other antient verſions.

It is omitted by all the greek fathers; and the traces of it, which ſome think they have found in them, are merely imaginary.

It is found indeed in latin manuſcripts of the New Teſtament; but in none of them before the tenth century.

The perſon, who firſt cited this ſuſpected verſe as being really written by the apoſtle John, was Vigilius Tapſenſis, a biſhop, who lived about the end of the 5th century: the ſame perſon, who moſt probably forged the creed, which goes about under the name of Athanaſius.

But Mr. Emlyn's inquiry into this text of the *three witneſſes*, and his reply to a Dutch divine upon it, have eſtabliſhed the ſpuriouſneſs of it ſo fully as to leave nothing to be added by thoſe that come after him. And in vain has Mr. Travis ſought to impeach his integrity, and to elude the force of his arguments. I am concerned to have cauſe to remark; that Mr. Emlyn's addreſs *(g)* to the biſhops and clergy, near fourſcore years ago, to remove this text out of the bible, has been ſo little attended to. I ſhall give you the heads of it. And what has been advanced juſt now in favour of this ſpurious text, in two printed tracts; the one, 'A *vindication* of the doctrine

trines, and the other, 'An *apology* for the liturgy 'and clergy of the church of England;' ſeem to render the arguments and admonitions which it contains, ſeaſonable and proper.

An Addreſs to both houſes of Convocation in 1715.

1. 'With all reſpect, I beſeech you to conſider as *in the ſight of God*; whether there be not ſufficient evidence, that *this text*, either *certainly*, or at leaſt very *probably*, never was *originally in the holy writings* of St. John, but unwarrantably *thruſt in* of later times. And if ſo, whether from the conſcientious regards you bear to the ſacred ſcriptures, they ought not to be purged of all ſuch *injurious additions*.

2. Whether *ſuch* evidence as is brought againſt *this verſe* before us, would not be judged by *you* ſufficient againſt *any* paſſage in *any claſſic* author whatever? Nay, would a *court* of judicature allow any *paragraph* to be good, in a writing of conſequence, *for which* no more, and *againſt which* ſo much can be fairly ſaid?

3. 'Whether an awful regard to that dreadful *anathema*, or denunciation, left on record by St. John, Rev. xxii. 18. againſt all who *add* to, or *diminiſh from* his writings, will permit *you* to be unconcerned in the matter before you?

4. Whether

4. 'Whether the honour and intereſt of our holy religion, will not be better ſerved by diſowning ingenuouſly what we find to be an error, even though it have long paſſed as current truth?

5. 'Whether there be any *more evidence* for this text, ſince the Reformation; when Luther would not put it into any edition of his german bible; and when our old bible, in Henry viii's and Edward vi's time, had theſe words of the ſeventh verſe, and the words *in earth*, in the eighth in ſmall letters, and ſometimes in a parentheſis; to ſhew that they were not to be eſteemed of the ſame certain authority with the other parts of the epiſtle, becauſe the manuſcripts wanted them?—Yes; the moſt valuable of all, *The Alexandrian manuſcript*, has ſince that time been brought among us: but alas! *this* has added great weight to the evidence *againſt it*. Beſides, *Eraſmus's Britiſh copy*, and the *Complutenſian Teſtament*, and the miſtake about Stephens's *ſeven manuſcripts*, were not underſtood to be ſo void of all weight, as now they appear to be.

6. 'Laſtly, The great *importance* of the ſubject matter of *this* much-doubted *text*, well deſerves your moſt impartial judgment upon it—— There can no doubt be made, but the common people think *ſome* branches of the *Liturgy* have their main foundation on this one doubted text. When they hear *Three perſons and one God*, in

the *fourth* petition of the *Litany*; and, *who with thee and the holy ghoſt ever liveth and reigneth one God*, in the *Doxologies*; they think nothing in the New Teſtament ſo like it as this *dubious text*. And will you not think it great pity, that your people ſhould build ſo weighty things on ſuch a ſlender foundation, if yourſelves ſo judge of it?

'I ſpeak this, becauſe I know not any *other* text that *directly* or *clearly* ſays the *ſame* thing, *viz.* that *the Father, Word, and Spirit are one*. They are not joined in one doxology, nor indeed do I find any doxology given to the *Holy Spirit*, in the *New Teſtament*, either jointly or ſeparately; much leſs is the *Spirit* ſaid to be *one with the Father and the Son*. I read of *one Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father*, Eph. iv. but not that *theſe three are one*. And if there be no *other text* which ſays this, it is not the *more likely* to have been St. John's ſaying here; but the *more grievous* to have it inſerted by any who had not *his* authority.

'Whether, upon the whole, this *paſſage* ſhall by your direction, in our *printed* books, be fairly *diſowned* and *marked* as formerly, or better *vindicated*, I know not: but if *neither* of *theſe* be done, and if preachers and writers ſtill go on, without due regard to *juſtice* and *their own eſtimation*, to urge this as an authority, after all that is ſaid to ſhew it has none; I apprehend, there are many underſtanding

underſtanding *chriſtians*, who will be apt to think they are not *fairly* dealt with.'

1 John v. 20.

Falſe reading.	*The apoſtle's own words.*
We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know him that is true. And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God, and eternal life.	*We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know* the true God. *And we are in him (e) that is* the true (God) by *his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This (f) is the true God, and eternal life.*

(e) — *by* his Son Jeſus Chriſt] Our old engliſh verſion has well rendered the words; *and we are in him that is true*, by *his Son Jeſus Chriſt*. The propoſition ἐν has ſo frequently this ſignification, that there is no occaſion to refer to particular inſtances.

(f) This is the true God, and eternal life.] Dr. Clarke remarks, that no writer before the time of the council of Nice, for the firſt 300 years, ever interprets theſe words concerning Chriſt. And the obvious meaning of this abridged way of ſpeaking, common to the apoſtle with his divine maſter, is, *This is the true God, and* the author of *eternal life*. So Chriſt ſays of himſelf, John xi. 25. *I am the life, i. e.* the author of it, the inſtrument of bringing mankind to eternal life.

This is the reading of the Alexandrian and other manuſcript copies, and it is found in ſeveral of the fathers, and many antient verſions of the New Teſtament. Our countryman, Dr Hammond, approves it. Dr. Whitby receives it, and well remarks, 'that thus the diſciple accords with his 'Maſter, *This is life* eternal, *that they may know* 'thee the only true God, John xvii. 3; and, 'only teacheth what he had learnt from him.' *Laſt Thoughts*, &c. p. 86.

Jude xxv.

Falſe reading.	The apoſtle's *own words.*
To the only wiſe God, our Saviour, be glory and majeſty, dominion and power, both now and for ever.	*To the only God, our Saviour,* through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, *be glory and majeſty, dominion and power, both now and for ever.*

This is the reading of the Alexandrian, Vatican and royal Pariſian manuſcript copies of the New Teſtament; of both the Syriac, the Arabian and Coptic verſions, and of the Vulgate, which is held authentic in the church of Rome. Father Simon accordingly renders it; A Dieu ſeul, nôtre Sauveur, par Jeſus Chriſt nôtre ſeigneur, appartient la gloire, la magnificence, l'empire, et la puiſſance

ſance avant tous les tems, maintenant, et pour toujours. Grieſbach, without heſitation, adopts this reading into the text. That honeſt man and moſt worthy divine, archbiſhop Tillotſon *(b)*, declares his approbation of it. His words I have put in the margin. And they may teach ſome perſons, that Jeſus Chriſt being called *our Saviour* as well as Almighty God, is no proof of the divinity of the former: he being only the inſtrument employed under God, the original Saviour, or author of our ſalvation.

(b) Tillotſon's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 619. on Jude xxv. 'Before I paſs on to the other particulars contained in theſe 'words, I cannot but take notice, that this *wiſe God*, here 'ſpoken of, is ſtiled, *our Saviour*, which ſome underſtand 'of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and bring this as an argument 'to prove his divinity.——But although I would not willingly part with any place, that may be fairly brought for 'the proof of the divinity of Chriſt, yet ſeeing there are ſo 'many plain texts in ſcripture for the proof of it, we have 'the leſs reaſon to ſtretch doubtful places; and that this is 'ſo, will appear to any one, who conſiders, that the title of '*Saviour* is ſeveral times in ſcripture attributed to God the 'Father; beſides that in a very antient and authentic copy 'we find the words read ſomewhat otherwiſe, and ſo as to put 'this verſe out of all controverſy, μονω θεω, σωτηρι ημων, δια 'Ιησου Χριστου, κυριω ημων, δοξα, &c. *To the only God, our Saviour*, &c.' N. B. Thoſe many texts, which this truly good man imagined to prove the divinity of Chriſt, have been often ſhewn to prove nothing of the ſort.

False reading.	St. John's *own words.*
—*saying,* I am alpha and omega, the first and the last; and *what thou seest, write in a book.*	—*saying, what thou seest, write in a book.*

This is the reading of the Alexandrian, Vatican, and royal Parisian manuscript copies of the new Testament, with many others; and also of the most antient versions. The true reading is restored in the edition of the greek new Testament, at Vienna, by the printer to the emperor, whilst Hardy, in England, holds forth the spurious reading as genuine, to our youths, who make use of his new Testament. It is well known, that Dr. Doddridge professes, that this text, more than any other in the bible, but which really makes no part of the bible, prevented him from believing Jesus Christ to have been a creature.

MISTRANSLATIONS *in our Engliſh bible, favouring the doctrine of* a Trinity, *and of the* Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt.

General Remarks.

I.

Throughout the bible, *ghoſt*, holy *ghoſt*, to be changed into *ſpirit*, holy *ſpirit*; becauſe the term *ghoſt* countenances the ignorance and prejudices of many, who imagine that thereby is to be underſtood a divine perſon, diſtinct from God, and not the divine extraordinary power or influence.

II.

Throughout the bible, where mention is made of *worſhiping* Chriſt, to change it into bowing down, *doing homage*, or *paying reſpect* to him; becauſe the word, in engliſh, miſleads inconſiderate readers to imagine, that it is religious worſhip that is paid to Chriſt; and thence to conclude him to be *God*. Whereas, by the ſame argument, it might be maintained, that the apoſtle Peter was *God*; becauſe (Acts x. 25.) the roman officer Cornelius *worſhiped* him.

Iſaiah

Iſaiah ix. 6.

Inſtead of	read
Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder; and his name ſhall be called, wonderful, councellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the prince of peace.	*Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called,* the meſſenger of the great deſign; the father of the age; *the prince of peace.*

In Commentaries and Eſſays, publiſhed by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the Scriptures, by a Layman: this tranſlation of the paſſage is given, and juſtified with great learning and force of evidence. Vol. i. p. 171. and 243.

—— liii. 8.

Inſtead of	read
He was taken from priſon, and from judgment, and who ſhall declare his (i) generation?	In his humiliation his condemnation was extorted, and the men of *his generation* who ſhall be

(i) Our faulty engliſh verſion, *who ſhall declare his generation?* as referring to ſomething myſterious and extraordinary in the circumſtances of Chriſt's origin, had moſt probably Juſtin Martyr * for it's author; who having been a heathen

* Juſtin. Op. p. 73. 139. 160. 166.

For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.	be able to deſcribe? for his life was cut off from the earth; through the wickedneſs of my people he was ſmitten to death.

The able hand, juſt now mentioned, p. 36. hath abundantly vindicated the tranſlation here given; and hath ſhewn with what exactneſs the paſſage, in it's ſeveral parts, applies to the character and ſufferings of the future meſſiah.

Jeremiah xxiii. 6.

Inſtead of	read
This is the name whereby he ſhall be called, the LORD *our righteouſneſs.*	*This is the name by which* the Lord ſhall call him, *our righteouſneſs.*

[c] Rendered literally, according to the hebrew [c] idiom, it would be, *And this is his name, by [c] which the Lord ſhall call our righteouſneſs*; a [c] phraſe exactly the ſame as, *And the Lord ſhall [c] call him ſo*; which, as I have obſerved in note on

heathen and philoſopher before his converſion, grafted many of his heathen philoſophic notions upon the bible. He has been ſhewn above to have been the firſt inventor of the doctrine of Chriſt's preexiſtence.

'on chap. xx. 3. implies that God would make 'him ſo as he called him, that is, *our righte-* 'ouſneſs, or the author and means of our ſalva- 'vation and acceptance. So by the ſame figure 'of ſpeech, Chriſt is ſaid to have been *made of* 'God unto us, wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanc- 'tification and redemption. 1 Cor. x. 30.'

This is the verſion, and explanation of a learned, valuable critic. What he farther adds with great liberality, and ſingular integrity, may not be omitted.

'I doubt not but ſome perſons will be offended with me for depriving them by this tranſlation of a favourite argument for proving the divinity of our Saviour from the Old Teſtament. But I cannot help it: I have done it with no ill deſign, but purely becauſe I think, and am morally ſure, that the text, as it ſtands, will not properly admit of any other conſtruction. The LXX (*viz.* thoſe who turned the old Teſtament out of hebrew into greek 200 years before Chriſt) have ſo tranſlated before me, in an age, when there could not poſſibly be any biaſs of prejudice, either for or againſt the before-mentioned doctrine; a doctrine, which draws it's deciſive proofs from the New Teſtament only.' Notes on Jeremiah, page 146. by Dr. Blayney, Oxford, 1784.

Hoſea

Hoſea i. 7:

Inſtead of	read
I will ſave them by the LORD *their God.*	*I will ſave them by* myſelf.

It is a known peculiarity of the hebrew writers, ſometimes to repeat the noun inſtead of ſubſtituting the pronoun for it. Thus, 1 Kings viii. 1. *Solomon aſſembled the elders of Iſrael unto king Solomon,* inſtead of *unto himſelf.* It would not have been needful to mention this here, if this paſſage from Hoſea had not been cited (*k*) as a proof that Chriſt is Jehovah God; and been interpreted, as if Almighty God had there ſaid, that *he would ſave men* by another Almighty God; which other Almighty God, they ſay, is Chriſt. And, in proof of it, Mr. Robinſon of Cambridge produces this text; as he alſo cites the miſerable tranſlation of Iſaiah ix. 6. in proof of Chriſt being the *everlaſting Father.* I mention theſe things, that this ingenious man, who is ſaid now to be far from embracing ſuch polytheiſm, may do what is

(*k*) "Plea for the Divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, p. 12. 15. in a paſtoral letter addreſſed to a congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters, at Cambridge, 1776." This work has paſſed through ſeveral editions. See an *Examination* of it, p. 31. 37, &c.

is in his power to recover thoſe whom he has led into or confirmed in ſuch groſs errors.

Zechariah xii. 10.

Inſtead of	read
— *they ſhall look upon* me, *whom they have pierced.*	— *they ſhall look on* him, *whom they have pierced.*

Biſhop Newcome *(l)* proves this by a variety of evidence, to have been the true reading, which he adopts into the text; and mentions particularly that Dr. Owen ſhews that Ignatius, Juſtin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Barnabas favour it. The paſſage however is to this day cited by many as ſpoken by the Almighty Being concerning himſelf, and as a proof that Jeſus, whom the ſoldier (John xix. 34, &c.) pierced with a ſpear, was *(ſtrange to think of)* Jehovah, the moſt high God.—See the Examination of Mr. Robinſon's Plea, &c. p. 94.

(l) An attempt towards an improved verſion, a metrical arrangement, and an explanation of the twelve minor prophets, p. 207. 208.

Zechariah xiii. 7.

Inſtead of	read
Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.	*Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man* who is near unto me; *ſaith Jehovah God of hoſts.*

This reading is adopted by biſhop Newcome, in agreement with Theodotion, and the interpretation of Junius and Tremellius, &c.

From our wrong tranſlation of the prophet's words, many perſons (*m*) would infer, that the Almighty being here declares Chriſt's equality to himſelf; that he was his *fellow-God.*

Matthew xii. 31.

Inſtead of	read
But the blaſphemy againſt the holy ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men.	*But the blaſphemy* of the ſpirit *ſhall not be forgiven unto men.*

Our tranſlators have inſerted, the words *the holy*, to make out what they imagined to be the true meaning, *viz.* that a Divine Perſon, which they call the Holy Ghoſt, was here intended to be

(*m*) See an Examination of Mr. Robinſon's Plea, &c. p. 110.

be mentioned by Chriſt. But if they had ſtrictly attended to his words only, they would have ſeen, that the *blaſphemy*, or ſpeaking evil *of the ſpirit*, was nothing more than the ſpeaking evil of the divine power, by which Chriſt wrought his miracles, in alleging, that he received this power from an evil being, and not from God.

John i. 1. 14.

Inſtead of	read
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not.	*In the beginning was* Wiſdom, *and* Wiſdom *was with God, and* God was Wiſdom. *The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by* it, *and without* it *was nothing made. In* it *was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not.*
There was a man ſent from God, whoſe name was John. The ſame	*There was a man ſent from God, whoſe name was John. The ſame came*

came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was ſent to bear witneſs of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was ſent to bear witneſs of that light. That was the true light which came into the *world, and* enlighteneth every man.

It (Divine Wiſdom) *was in the world, and the world was made by* it, *and the world knew* it *not.* It *came to* its *own land, and* its *own people received* it *not. But as many as received* it, *to them* it *gave power to become the ſons of God, even to them who believe on* its *name. Who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.	*And* Wisdom became man, *and dwelt among us, and we beheld* its *glory, the glory as of the* well beloved *of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

It has been proved in the former part of this work, that this rendering of the term logos, which we translate *Word*, by *Wisdom*, is just, and proper, and pointed out by the scripture itself. For all writers, antient and modern, agree in their sentiments, that St. John alludes to Solomon's description of *Wisdom*, Prov. viii. although the greater part of them have given a wrong turn to and construction of this logos, *Word* or *Wisdom*, and have made it a divine person, another God; of which, as has been shewn, Solomon knew nothing. Neither had St. John any idea of so monstrous a thing, as another God, monstrous to a jew; but intended only, after Solomon's manner, to describe the one, eternal, almighty Being, by his attribute of *Wisdom*, the better to declare, and in a more striking way, that the gifts of a divine wisdom and power were in a most extraordinary degree communicated to Christ, so that *Wisdom*, (Divine Wisdom) might be said to

become

become man, and to dwell among us in the perſon of the holy Jeſus.

And this ſurely was a very proper preface and introduction to his hiſtory of Chriſt, and a very ſatisfactory account why the apoſtle choſe to begin it in this ſingular manner.

That the evangeliſt could not poſſibly intend to hold forth Chriſt under the name, logos, *Word, Wiſdom*, as a preexiſtent being, and ſecond God, has been ſhewn;

1. By his never ſpeaking concerning Chriſt, nor ever introducing Chriſt ſpeaking of himſelf, that he had ever exiſted in a former ſtate as God:

2. But on the contrary, he deſcribes Chriſt uniformly as a man, like others; and particularly, after our Lord's reſurrection and exaltation in heaven, this apoſtle joins with all his fellow-apoſtles, in declaring Jeſus to have been one of the human race, and of their own nation, with extraordinary powers, and credentials from almighty God, as a prophet; and repeatedly, as his higheſt title as it were, John and the other apoſtles ſtile their divine maſter, *God's ſervant*. Acts ii. 14. 22. iii. 11. 12. 13. 14. iv. 24. 27.

So that we have full demonſtration, that the evangeliſt, St. John, did not believe his divine maſter to be any other than a human creature; and therefore never could intend to ſpeak of him

here as a preexiſtent being; as another, and ſecond God.

This notion of Chriſt, as being a ſecond God and creator, was firſt brought in among chriſtians by heathen converts, from their philoſophy; and it has been ſhewn, that moſt probably Juſtin Martyr, a good man, but addicted to Plato's ſect, and of a warm imagination, was the inventor of it; and by him, almoſt from the beginning, the chriſtian world has been miſled.

Other arguments have been produced in the former chapter of this book, but theſe I hope will ſuffice to eradicate this inveterate deep-rooted prejudice, that St. John here treats of Chriſt as the logos, and a God, *next* to the one ſupreme, or *equal* to him: for this is the principal paſſage that contributes to keep up ſuch polytheiſm, by common readers unfortunately imagining, and taking for granted, that Chriſt is the Word or Wiſdom of God, which is himſelf, by which he is denominated.

John i. 15.

Inſtead of	read
John bare witneſs of him, and cried, ſaying; This is he of whom I ſpake. He that cometh after me, is preferred	*John bare witneſs of him, ſaying; This is he of whom I ſpake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he*

before me: for he was before me. — *he was* greater than *me.*

John i. 30.

This is he of whom I ſaid; after me cometh a man, who is preferred before me: for he was before me. — *This is he of whom I ſaid: After me cometh a man who is preferred before me: for he was* greater than *me.*

The baptiſt is here ſpeaking only of the ſuperior dignity of Chriſt's office to his own, and not of any prior exiſtence. And this is the proper ſenſe of the words. See Matth. iii. 11. Mark i. 7. Luke iii. 16.

John i. 14.

Inſtead of — read

—we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father. — *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the* beloved *of the Father.*

—— — 18.

No man hath ſeen God at any time: the only-begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father; he hath declared him. — *No man hath ſeen God at any time: the* beloved *Son, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

Monogenes, only begotten, as our tranſlation has it; is properly *an only ſon*. And becauſe ſuch are for the moſt part, greatly loved, thence the word is transferred to ſignify *beloved, moſt beloved*. And Mr. Whiſton, *(n)* has ſhewn in a valuable remark on this word, that St. John moſt probably borrowed it, in this ſenſe, from the greek tranſlation of the hebrew ſcriptures which was then in uſe.

Only begotten is certainly moſt groſs and improper language to be uſed in engliſh; eſpecially with reſpect to the Deity. It was probably adopted by our tranſlators, and is certainly underſtood by the generality of their readers, as implying ſome *ſingular* and *eternal generation* of Jeſus Chriſt, before he became a man. But there is nothing advanced by St. John that can lead any one to ſuch an idea concerning Chriſt.

John iii. 18.

Inſtead of	read
For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believed in him ſhould not periſh.	*For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his* beloved *Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh.*

John

(n) Whiſton's Sermons, p. 309, 310. See alſo Sequel to an Apology for reſigning the vicarage of Catterick, p. 139, 140. *note.*

John v. 18.

Inſtead of	read
Therefore the jews ſought the more to kill him, becauſe he not only had broken the ſabbath, but had ſaid that God was his Father, making himſelf equal with God.	*Therefore the jews ſought the more to kill him, becauſe he not only had broken the ſabbath, but had ſaid that God was his Father, making himſelf* like *unto God.*

That this is a juſt tranſlation (o) of the original, cannot be queſtioned. It is only produced becauſe many readers are led, from the preſent tranſlation, to fancy, that there was ſomething ſaid by our Saviour, which the jews interpreted to imply his being equal with God, and they too readily think it was ſo. But although chriſtians, through the habit of hearing ſuch a thing from their childhood, are not ſhocked at the thought of a human creature like Chriſt being equal to God, it was an idea that could never enter into the

(o) Our tranſlators have fallen into a ſimilar miſtake in Luke xx. 36; where ισαγγελοι ſhould be rendered, not *equal*, but *like* unto the angels. For it is not an equality to thoſe heavenly beings, in rank and faculties, which our Lord here authorizes his virtuous and ſincere followers to expect immediately in the future world, at the reſurrection; but only a more perfect, and unperiſhing condition of being.

the mind of a jew. What they laid to our Lord's charge, was, his aſſuming, not an equality to, but an authority from, God, as their Meſſiah; which they denied him to be.

John vi. 33.

Inſtead of	read
For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.	*For the bread of God is* that *which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*

The reply made to theſe words of Chriſt, ſhews that this is the proper tranſlation of them; *viz.* ver. 34. *Then ſaid they unto him; Lord, evermore give us this bread.* And it ſhews among many other proofs, that our Lord ſpoke of his doctrine, (i. e. *the bread of God)* and of himſelf, *coming down from heaven,* in the ſame ſenſe; *i. e.* as having both a divine authority.

John viii. 58.

Inſtead of	read
Before Abraham was, I am.	*Before Abraham was, I am* the light of the world.

It

It has been ſhewn by ſeveral moſt judicious chriſtians, that our Saviour's words, as the evangeliſt puts them, are thus to be ſupplied; as he unqueſtionably refers to ſomething he had ſaid before, declaratory of his true character from God, of his being the Meſſiah or the Chriſt; and moſt probably to what is recorded ver. 12.

So that here is a full end put to that moſt groundleſs concluſion commonly made from theſe words; *contrary* to grammar; *contrary* to common ſenſe; *contrary* to the words of Moſes, to which alluſion is ſuppoſed to be made, as tranſlated by the LXX; *viz.* that our Lord ſhould here declare himſelf to be, the ο ων, I AM, *the ſelf-exiſtent, eternal* GOD.

John xviii. 3.

Inſtead of	read
This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.	*This is life eternal, that they may know Thee* to be *the only true God, and Jeſus* to be *the Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

In both the clauſes of this ſentence, the infinitive ειναι, *to be,* is underſtood. And Χριστον, Chriſt, is certainly not a proper name, but a name of office:

office: *viz.* the anointed prophet, the Chriſt, the Meſſiah.

And the moſt unlearned, if he has the underſtanding of a human creature, and will give attention without prejudice to what he reads, may eaſily perceive for himſelf, from theſe words of Chriſt;

1. That there is but *one true God*, one ſingle perſon who is this *true God*, denoted to be ſuch by the pronouns, *Thee*, *Thou*, which cannot ſignify more than one perſon. And,

2. That the holy Jeſus is expreſsly and particularly excluded from being *the true God*, and contradiſtinguiſhed from HIM, by being called the Chriſt, *i. e.* the anointed prophet, and alſo the meſſenger of *the true God.*

There is moreover a concluſion of the greateſt moment, moſt plainly and evidently to be deduced from theſe words of our Lord, in his devout prayer for himſelf and his diſciples; *namely*, that the bleſſed Jeſus, our lord and maſter, in addreſſing the Father, as the only true God, whoſe meſſenger at the ſame time he calls himſelf, teaches us; that whoever worſhips any other perſon beſides the Father; whoever worſhips either himſelf, or the Holy Spirit, worſhips a *falſe* god. For if the Father be the only true God, all others, in our Saviour's own account and eſtimate, muſt be *falſe* gods.

I cannot

I cannot refrain here from inſerting a paſſage out of the excellent Tillotſon's Sermons.

'Prayer is a proper act of religious worſhip, 'and therefore peculiar to God alone; and we 'are commanded to *worſhip the Lord our God, 'and ſerve him only.* And no where in ſcripture 'are we directed to addreſs our prayers, and 'ſupplications, and thankſgivings to any but 'God *alone*, and only in the name and mediation 'of Jeſus Chriſt. Our bleſſed Saviour himſelf 'hath taught us, to put up all our prayers to 'God, our heavenly Father, Luke xi. 2. *When 'you pray, ſay, Our Father, which art in heaven.* 'Which plainly ſhews to whom our prayers are 'to be addreſſed; and unleſs we can call *an angel*, 'or the *bleſſed virgin*, or a *ſaint*, (he might have 'added) or *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Father; we can pray 'to none of them. Tillotſon, vol. ii. p. 132.

N. B. I ſhould not have thought of mentioning this inconſiderable amendment of our preſent engliſh tranſlation of this text, or have added theſe remarks, but for the ſad perverſion of our Saviour's words, made by ſo good and learned a man as biſhop Pearce. In half a century, whoever lives to ſee it, if not ſooner, our ſucceſſors will wonder that it ſhould have been neceſſary to refute ſuch abſurdities.

John

John xvii. 24.

Inſtead of	read
Father, I will, that they alſo whom Thou haſt given me, be with me where I am.	*Father, I* deſire, *that they alſo whom Thou haſt given me, be with me where I am.*

This may ſeem to ſome a trifling emendation. But as the verſion now ſtands, many engliſh readers apprehend Chriſt to be ſpeaking to God as his equal: whereas it is truly the language of a ſupplicant, dependent creature, addreſſing his Father, and his God; yet with conſcious *(p)* ſatisfaction of having done his duty, and approved himſelf to him, and thence deriving an undoubting, pleaſing expectation of having his prayer heard.

Acts iii. 13. 26.
—— iv. 27. 30.

Inſtead of	read
The God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jeſus.	*The God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his* ſervant *Jeſus.*

Unto

(p) I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me, &c. ver. 4, 5.

Unto you firſt, God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you.

For of a truth againſt the holy child Jeſus, whom Thou haſt anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Iſrael, were gathered together.

— that ſigns and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jeſus.

Unto you firſt, God having raiſed up his ſervant *Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you.*

For of a truth againſt the holy ſervant *Jeſus, whom Thou haſt anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Iſrael, were gathered together.*

— that ſigns and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy ſervant *Jeſus.*

No ſcholar but muſt allow the juſtneſs of the tranſlation in theſe paſſages.

It is obſervable, that the ſame word, which is rendered, ch. iv. ver. 25. *by the mouth,* παιδος σε, *of thy* ſervant *David,* is immediately afterwards, ver. 27. rendered, *thy holy,* παιδος σε, CHILD, when applied to Chriſt. This ſhews what a biaſs our tranſlators lay under, and how afraid they were of calling Jeſus God's *ſervant.* And yet if their prejudices would have allowed them any freedom of thought and inquiry; they would have found, that it was a name, which our Lord moſt frequently took

took to himſelf, and moſt unqueſtionably held it his higheſt honour to be God's eſpecial ſervant, employed on his moſt benevolent deſigns. For his general language concerning himſelf, was, that he was *ſent* of God, one whom the Father *ſent*; *i. e.* his meſſenger, his ſervant.

Acts iii. 14. 15.

Inſtead of	read
But ye denied the holy one, and the juſt, and deſired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the prince of life, whom God hath raiſed from the dead.	*But ye denied* that holy and juſt perſon, *and deſired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the* guide to life, whom God hath raiſed from the dead.

How moſt prepoſterouſly ſome perſons, even in our own days, from theſe two verſes ill underſtood, would conclude Chriſt to be the eternal God, hath been intimated in the foregoing chapter of this work.

Acts vii. 59.

Inſtead of	read
And they ſtoned Stephen, calling upon God, *and ſaying, Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.*	*And they ſtoned Stephen, calling upon* Jeſus, *and ſaying, Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.*

Cur

Our tranſlators have inſerted the word *God*, of their own accord: for what reaſon it is hard to ſay, unleſs to take the opportunity of declaring, that Chriſt was, as they imagined, in this paſſage taught to be God, by prayer being made to him.

If any word be inſerted, it ſhould be Jeſus, as I have done, to compleat the ſenſe in engliſh. After what has been remarked elſewhere, to ſatisfy the reader here that this ſingle invocation of Chriſt does not imply him to be any thing above a human creature, highly exalted in favour with God, I ſhall ſubjoin a remark upon it, in a work *(q)* which has lately appeared, and which deſerves the ſerious attention of the public.

'In this viſion, Stephen beholding Jeſus in 'that ſtation of glory, by God's right hand, might 'call upon his maſter Chriſt to ſave or to receive 'his ſpirit. Seeing Chriſt in heaven, and know-'ing Chriſt's power with God, was as good a 'reaſon for Stephen to call for, and deſire his 'help, as it was for his diſciples, who ſaw his 'power on earth, to call to him to ſave them *in* '*a ſtorm*, Matt. viii. 24—27. Yet Stephen's example

(q) The ſcripture account of the attributes and worſhip of God; and of the character and offices of Jeſus Chriſt, p. 152. By Hopton Haynes, Eſq. Aſſay-maſter of the Mint. Printed for Johnſon, 1790.

'ample is to others no rule, unleſs they are en-
'couraged by a *like viſion.* We are not to depart
'from general rules of duty, and juſtify our prac-
'tice, by a ſingle, and extraordinary inſtance and
'example.'

Acts ix. 14. 21.

Inſtead of	read
And here he hath authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that call on thy name.	*And here he hath authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that* are called by thy name, or that appeal to thy name.
And all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid; is not this he which deſtroyed them that called on this name.	*And all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid; is not this he who deſtroyed them that* were called by this name, or appealed to this name.

That this is the proper rendering and ſenſe of the words, hath been ſhewn in the former part of this work, and elſewhere, by myſelf, and others.

St. Luke's own words, a little before, might have led our tranſlators into this their true meaning, if their prejudices had not made them too eager to lay hold of any thing that had the appearance of making Chriſt to be God. and the

object

object of religious worſhip. For in the ſame breath, as it were, at ver. 2. of this chapter, the ſacred hiſtorian expreſſes the very ſame thing only in different words; *viz.* that *if Saul found* any of this way *he was to bring them bound to Jeruſalem: any of this way* anſwers to *any called by this name*, i. e. any chriſtians.

Our hiſtorian, moreover, could never intend to repreſent chriſtians, as a claſs of men diſtinguiſhed by calling upon or invoking the name of Chriſt, the founder of their religion, in prayer: becauſe neither in his firſt treatiſe, in which he gives a hiſtory of Chriſt, nor in his ſecond treatiſe, *The Acts*, does he ever denominate Chriſt God, or an object of worſhip: but on the contrary, throughout both, deſcribes him as a creature of God, one of the human race; who offered up his devotions continually to God, the Father of himſelf and of all mankind, and directed all others to pray to the Father only.

1 Cor. i. 2.

Inſtead of	read
— *with all that, in every place, call upon the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*	— *with all that, in every place,* are called by, or appealed to *the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Dr. Hammond ſaw the miſtake of our engliſh tranſlation in this inſtance, and has inſerted a valuable note to confirm his own ſentiment, that it ſhould be read, not *that call upon*, but that are called by *the name* of Chriſt. He very properly ſtiles this language of the apoſtle 'a *periphraſis* of chriſtians;' *viz.* a way of ſpeaking, where many words are uſed to expreſs the ſenſe of one.

This inſtance of wrong tranſlation is inſerted a little out of its courſe, on account of its connection with the foregoing.

Acts xvii. 29.

Inſtead of	read
Foraſmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the godhead is like unto gold, or ſilver, or ſtone graven by art, and man's device.	*Foraſmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that* the Divine Being *is like unto gold, or ſilver, or ſtone graven by art, and man's device.*

This is an exact tranſlation of the word in the original, uſed by the apoſtle. And hence it follows, that THE DIVINE BEING is a proper ſcriptural name of God, when we are ſpeaking of him.

The

The ſtrange word, *godhead*, is therefore by all means to be diſcarded; and the more, as being ſuppoſed to denote the divine nature or eſſence, about which the ſcriptures are wholly ſilent, it gives countenance to the doctrine of what is called *Three perſons*, or a *Trinity of perſons* in the godhead; which is a language aſſuredly as unſcriptural as it is unintelligible.

Acts xx. 28.

Inſtead of	read
— *feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.*	— *feed the church of* the Lord (*i. e.* Chriſt) *which he hath purchaſed with his own blood:* or — *feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with the blood* of his own Son.

Theſe *readings*, the one or the other of them, are favoured by the beſt or moſt antient manuſcript copies of the New Teſtament. Wetſtein ſhews that Chryſoſtom and Athanaſius, the great patrons of orthodoxy in the fourth century, reprobated the uſe of ſuch ſhocking language, as the *blood* of God; and hence we may be aſſured that the reading in our engliſh tranſlation was not then known.

Romans i. 3.

Inſtead of	read
— *concerning his Son, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; who was made of the ſeed of David according to the fleſh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the ſpirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection from the dead.*	— *concerning his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; who was made of the ſeed of David* by natural deſcent, *and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the ſpirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection from the dead.*

By natural deſcent will be found a more juſt tranſlation, and a fitter repreſentation of the apoſtle's words than the literal rendering of them, *according to the fleſh.* For idioms and peculiarities of ſpeech can ſeldom bear being turned, word for word, out of one language into another; but will appear harſh, and often obſcure the ſenſe. Thus the common ſalutation in French, *comment vouz portez vous?* which in the literal rendering is, *how do you carry yourſelf?* would hardly be intelligible in Engliſh. And ſo here, *according to the fleſh*, though by uſe we can endure it, and fix ſome meaning to it, 'tis nevertheleſs moſt uncouth, and the ſenſe is much better expreſſed by the term, *natural deſcent.*

But

But there is another reaſon for changing our preſent tranſlation; becauſe it tends to miſlead perſons with reſpect to the perſon of Chriſt. For this phraſe, of the ſeed of David *according to the fleſh*, is generally interpreted to mean, *according to his human nature*; as though it implied that Chriſt had another nature, beſides that which he derived by his deſcent from David. But whatever meaning others may put upon his words, it is certain St. Paul never intended any ſuch matter by them. For a little farther on in this epiſtle (ix. 3.) he ſtiles the jews, my kinſmen *according to the fleſh*. So that we have as good grounds from ſuch language to infer, that Paul had another nature beſides his human nature, as that our Saviour had. In the paſſage before us there is no reference to any two imaginary natures, but to the two different conditions of Chriſt; as a mortal man, like others of the human race, and as diſtinguiſhed and fitted for his high office as prophet of the chriſtian church, and teacher of the divine will to men, by gifts of the holy Spirit, and by being in an extraordinary manner raiſed from the dead, by Almighty God.

Romans i. 20.

Inſtead of	read
For the inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.	*For the inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and* providence.

Common engliſh readers are ſo tinctured with the notion, that this word, *godhead*, ſignifies the divine nature admitting a multiplicity of perſons, that on that account it ought to be excluded the ſcriptures, as well as for its being wholly unintelligible. Θειοτης, in the apoſtle's idea here, probably meant the divine ſovereign dominion, his providence.

Romans ix. 5.

Inſtead of	read
—*of whom, as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Amen.*	*Of whom*, by natural deſcent, *Chriſt came. God, who is over all*, be bleſſed *for ever. Amen.*

Cur

Our tranſlators would have heſitated in applying this language to Chriſt, if their minds had been ſufficiently unbiaſſed, and at liberty to examine the ſtrong arguments which there are for the apoſtle's intending to ſpeak of God only.

1. For firſt, the early chriſtian writers, who were but too much diſpoſed to exalt the perſon of Chriſt, did not underſtand theſe words as ſpoken of him. Some of them pronounce it to be raſhneſs and impiety, to ſay that Chriſt was the God over all, which they would not have done if this paſſage had belonged to him; others affirm, that no pious perſon could uſe ſuch language concerning Chriſt. Dr. Clarke Scrip. Doctr. p. 85, &c.

2. This that is here adopted as the true reading, is probably the way in which thoſe antients read the paſſage. For the beſt critics have obſerved, that the words will full as well admit this conſtruction as the other: the verb, ἐστω, *be*, on other occaſions being left to be ſupplied. See Matt. xv. 15.

3. It is alſo obſerved, that in all other places the term εὐλογητος, *bleſſed*, is appropriated to the Father only: and when at any time Chriſt is ſaid to be εὐλογημενος, *bleſſed*, as Matth. xxi. 9, &c. it is quite another thing.

4. It remains therefore that the words in queſtion, are to be read, *God, who is over all, be bleſſed for ever*; and are to be underſtood,

as a ſudden pious thought, and ejaculation of the apoſtle's to almighty God, ſtruck with admiration of the divine goodneſs in the ſubject before him. And this is rendered the more probable, by its being conſonant to the apoſtle's manner of writing, to interrupt the matter he is treating of, by breaking forth into ſuch devout ſtrains. Thus Eph. i. 3. immediately after his ſalutation of them, he ſtrikes out; " *bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things by Chriſt*; and not long after, in the ſame epiſtle, iii. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do for us abundantly, above all that we can do or think,* &c. See alſo Rom. i. 25. xi. 16. 2 Cor. i. 3. xi. 31.

I ſhould think theſe arguments muſt be ſufficiently convincing to all, that St. Paul in this place is far from ſtiling Chriſt, *God over all.* But I would alſo wiſh the reader to make uſe of his own underſtanding, and conſider, whether the apoſtle, whether any man, in the uſe of his reaſon, could advance ſuch a contradiction, as in the ſame ſentence, to call Chriſt the moſt high God, and alſo a jew lineally deſcended from jews: for this laſt is the meaning of the words *of whom as concerning the fleſh Chriſt came.*

1 Corinthians ii. 14.

Inſtead of	read
But the natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God: for they are fooliſhneſs unto him.	*But the* animal *man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God: for they are fooliſhneſs unto him.*

This paſſage, as it ſtands in our engliſh tranſlation, has been, and ſtill is made uſe of, to inſinuate, that men are not to truſt to their reaſon in interpreting the ſcripture, or that in the uſe of their reaſon they cannot properly judge of the things contained in the ſcripture: whereas ψυχικος properly ſignifies the man who follows his animal propenſities and inclinations, and not his reaſon; which is God's natural gift to us, and that faculty whereby we are to judge of any extraordinary or revealed light that he affords us.

1 Corinthians x. 9.

Inſtead of	read
Neither let us tempt Chriſt, as ſome of them alſo tempted.	*Neither let us tempt* the Lord (or God) *as ſome of them alſo tempted.*

The

The beſt manuſcript copies of the New Teſtament favour one or other of theſe readings, with other important authorities. I put biſhop Pearce's note (*r*) in the margin. See alſo Sequel to an Apology for reſigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 262.

Galatians iv. 4.

Inſtead of	read
When the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.	*When the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.*

Sent forth, the ſame as ſent from God, John i. 6. xvii. 18. *i. e.* having a divine commiſſion. St. Paul then ſays here, that at his appointed time, the Almighty gave a commiſſion to Jeſus, the ſon of Mary, of a jewiſh family, ſubject to the law of Moſes. Beauſobre renders it, Dieu a envoyé ſon Fils, *né* d' une femme, et aſſujetti a la loi.

Epheſians

(*r*) The Alexandrian manuſcript (ex emendatione, ſays Wetſtein) with the Æthiopian verſion read here, θεος, God, not χριστος, Chriſt, which firſt reading Grotius highly approves of: and I am not againſt his opinion, becauſe (there being no accuſative after σταυρωσαν in the next ſentence) θεον, God, ſeems better underſtood there than χριστον, Chriſt. However, ſome other MSS. and fathers read κυριον, Lord, which perhaps was the true reading; and being by ſome thought to mean Chriſt, was changed into χριστον, and by others, who thought it meant God, was changed into θεον. Pearce in loc.

Epheſians iv. 32.

Inſtead of	read
And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you.	*And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God,* by Chriſt, *hath forgiven you.*

This is the proper meaning of the prepoſition ἐν, in this place. God is never ſaid to forgive any one for Chriſt's ſake, but out of his own benignity and kindneſs, without the interference of Chriſt, or of any other perſon.

Coloſſians ii. 9.

Inſtead of	read
For in him dwelleth all the fullneſs of the godhead bodily.	*For in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the* deity bodily.

In Epheſians iii. 19, our apoſtle prays that the chriſtians to whom he writes *might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* The *fulneſs* ſpoken of in both caſes, that of Chriſt, and that of chriſtians his followers, was from the communication of divine powers to each; though to Chriſt, as it is expreſſed, John iii. 34. *God gave the ſpirit without meaſure.*

For

For reaſons above-mentioned, the ſcholaſtic word, *godhead*, is rejected, becauſe to common readers it countenances the ſtrange notion of a God conſiſting of three perſons.

Philippians ii. 5, &c.

This is the famous paſſage, which in our common tranſlation, ſpeaks of *Chriſt Jeſus being in the form of God*, and *thinking it not robbery to be equal with God*, and *taking upon him the form of a ſervant*; which on account of the various miſtakes about it, I ſhall conſider more particularly.

Many underſtand it to be expreſſive of Chriſt's humility in leaving a glorious condition of being, in which he had exiſted before all ages, either as the ſupreme God, or the creator of all things under him, and condeſcending to animate a human body, and ſo to become man.

But as, throughout the ſcriptures, we never find, that Chriſt himſelf claimed any reſpect from men, for any thing that he had been before he was born; and his apoſtles never elſewhere refer us to ſuch an extraordinary inſtance of humility, as that of leaving another world to come into this, there is reaſon to heſitate, and to ſuſpect, that nothing of the ſort is intended here. For it is a circumſtance of that magnitude, and ſo much to their maſter's honour, that if it had been really ſo, we can hardly

hardly imagine that they would have taken ſuch ſmall notice of it; but would have been frequently introducing and dwelling upon it.

For this, and various reaſons beſides, others have explained the apoſtle's words here, and more juſtly, as it appears to me, as declaratory of our Lord's humility in the courſe of his life in the preſent world only, without reference to any other ſtate of being. And they have interpreted the *form of God*, in which the apoſtle ſays he was, not as any thing belonging to him in a former ſtate, but as what "was enjoyed by him in this world, ſays Dr. Lardner; denoting his knowlege of the hearts of men, his power of healing diſeaſes, and raiſing the dead, and working other miracles, at all times, whenever he pleaſed." From a power of this divine kind intruſted with him, he might be truly ſaid to be godlike, in the form of God. Μορφη, *(f)* forma, &c. the form of God, ſays Grotius, as cited by Lardner, denotes only an external appearance, ſomething that ſtrikes our ſenſes; ſuch for inſtance as Chriſt's eminent power of healing all diſeaſes, caſting out demons, raiſing the

(f) Μορφη, forma, in noſtris libris non ſignificat internum et occultum aliquid, ſed id quod in oculos incurrit, qualis erat eximia in Chriſto poteſtas ſanandi morbos omnes, ejiciendi dæmonas, excitandi mortuos, mutandi rerum naturas: quæ vere divina ſunt, ita ut Moſes, qui tam magna non fecit, dictus ob id fuerit deus Pharaoni. Grot. in Philip. ii. 6.

the dead, changing the nature of things; which may be called ſomewhat truly divine: ſo that Moſes, though far from doing any thing of the kind equal to what Chriſt did, was nevertheleſs called (Exod vii. 1.) a god unto Pharaoh."

This interpretation will be more confirmed, and perhaps ſome new light let in upon this celebrated paſſage, by conſidering its connection with the ſubject the apoſtle is treating upon.

A little before, at the 27th verſe of the firſt chapter, he begins an exhortation to his Philippian converts to peace and unity; and reſuming it in the beginning of this ſecond chapter, he ſays; *If there be therefore any conſolation in Chriſt*, *i. e.* belonging to us as chriſtians; *if any comfort of love*, *i. e.* if any comfort to be derived from that mutual love which is peculiarly bound upon us; *if any fellowſhip*, rather any joint participation of the ſpirit, *i. e.* of the gifts of the ſpirit, then ordinarily diſpenſed to believers; *if any bowels and mercies*, *i. e.* any natural kindneſs and forbearance towards each other; *fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man alſo on the things of others.*

To

To what end now this repeated call in ſuch variety of expreſſion, to think humbly of their own powers and talents, and highly of thoſe of others, but with reference to thoſe gifts of the ſpirit, which he actually mentions here, and of which he ſpeaks in another place, (1 Cor. xii.) as being ſometimes the cauſe of much confuſion, ſtrife and vain-glory in their public aſſemblies for worſhip, and againſt which he would guard his beloved Philippians; that in the exerciſe of their different gifts, of ſpeaking in unknown tongues; of propheſy, *i. e.* teaching by a divine extraordinary aſſiſtance; of healing diſeaſes by a word's ſpeaking, &c. they ſhould not let any pride or vanity take place, but the edification of others, for which only ſuch gifts were beſtowed, to be their only object.

After pointing out to them a proper lowly temper and conduct with reſpect to theſe ſpiritual gifts beſtowed upon them; our apoſtle is naturally led to recommend to them the behaviour of their great lord and maſter, under *his* moſt extraordinary gifts and endowments, and which I hope the reader will plainly ſee to be his purpoſe in what he goes on to ſay, which is leſs perceivable in our engliſh verſion by omitting the connecting particle, FOR.

Philip. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8.

Inſtead of	read
Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus.	For *the ſame mind* ought *to be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Paraphraſe.——For ye ought to be of that humble condeſcending diſpoſition in the uſe of theſe extraordinary divine communications, which ſhewed itſelf in Jeſus, the great anointed prophet of God, and our lord and maſter.

Inſtead of	read
Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.	*Who being in the form of God (t),* held not the being like unto God a ſpoil, or prize.

Paraphraſe.——Who being inveſted with the moſt extraordinary divine powers, did not ſhew any eagerneſs, or betray any ſelfiſh complacency in them.

Inſtead

(t) ουκ αρπαγμον ηγησατο] held not the being like unto God in the light of a prize: *i. e.* did not look upon it with thoſe affections, which uſually ariſe in the minds of men, when they obtain great unexpected ſpoil. J. J.

Philippians ii. —

Inſtead of	read.
But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of man.	But emptied himſelf, taking the form of a ſervant, being in the *(u)* likeneſs of common mortals.

Paraphraſe.——But on the contrary, during the whole courſe of his miniſtry, acted as a perſon who was intirely deſtitute of ſuch flattering diſtinctions; inaſmuch as he condeſcended, with the utmoſt ſelf-abaſement to the ſpiritual neceſſities of others, as a ſlave attending on his God.

Inſtead of	read
And being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became	*And* appearing only as an ordinary mortal, *(x) he humbled himſelf, obedient*

(u) This is an explanation of his not being greedy to retain a likeneſs to God; *i. e.* he did not eſteem thoſe enſigns of deity and dignity a deſireable thing, but gave them up. J. J.

(x) How very expreſsly and particularly does St. Paul here teach us, that our Lord was one of our own ſpecies, ſubject

obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.	*and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.*

Paraphraſe.——And thus being in the condition of a common man, he willingly gave way to the loweſt degradation of himſelf, in ſubmitting by the will of God and for our good, to the painful and ignominious death of the croſs.

Philippians ii. —

Inſtead of	read
Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name.	*Wherefore God hath highly exalted (y) him, and* of his great favour *hath beſtowed upon him a name, which is above every name.*

Paraphraſe.——Wherefore God hath raiſed him to eminent dignity, and of his goodneſs beſtowed upon him the moſt honourable diſtinction.

Inſtead

ſubject to all the innocent infirmities of our nature, with ſuperior endowments from God, and at laſt highly rewarded by him for his virtues, and for nobly dying in the cauſe of truth!

(y) The exaltation of Chriſt is the prevalence of his religion by a divine power. J. J.

Philippians ii. —

Inſtead of	read
That at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.	*That* to *the name* (z) *of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.*

Paraphraſe.——That the whole world ſhall be brought to ſubmit to the authority of Chriſt, and to believe the goſpel, with thankful acknowlegement of thoſe gracious terms of a future eternal happineſs, which Jeſus delivered from the ſupreme Father of all: to whom ultimately all praiſe and honour are due.

Thus hath it been fully evinced, that St. Paul here, in ſpeaking of Chriſt Jeſus *being in the form*

(z) — that *to his name*; i. e. in acknowlegement of his religion, every human creature ſhould bend. For things above the earth, below the earth, &c. mean only that all human creatures ſhould acknowlege his religion; *i. e.* glorify the Father. J. J.

of God, and taking upon him *the form of a ſervant*, had nothing in his mind relating to any prior exiſtence of our Saviour, but only intended to expreſs the very extraordinary, godlike gifts of a divine wiſdom and power conferred upon him, and his humble demeanour under them. This idea was briefly intimated to the public a few years ſince (*a*), and mentioned as having been received from a learned friend.

That friend was the late Dr. John Jebb: one of thoſe great and rare characters, whoſe whole energy of mind, and his was one of the largeſt and moſt benevolent, was continually on the ſtretch to promote piety, virtue and the public good; with an unwearied attention, at the ſame time, to ſerve his private friends and acquaintance, by every kind office.

It pleaſed the divine providence to remove him from us, before he had found leiſure to give a proper form to his admirable (*b*) lectures, and intended

(*a*) Two Diſſertations, with a Poſtſcript, p. 46. 47. Printed for Johnſon, 1779.

(*b*) At the end of the manuſcript, which contains the plan of theſe lectures, were thoſe "Theological propoſitions, and miſcellaneous obſervations, with general maxims of reaſon and

intended illuſtration of the ſacred oracles, eſpecially of the New Teſtament: for which ſcarcely any man in any age ſince the apoſtles, was better fitted. And it was an object, which he never (*c*) loſt ſight of, in his application to, and in the midſt of the labours of his new toilſome profeſſion, after that out of a principle of conſcience, and that he might not any longer worſhip any other Being but the one true God and parent of the univerſe, he had reſigned his preferments and proſpects in the eſtabliſhed church.

In ſome looſe papers among his manuſcript notes on the New Teſtament, all which he kindly bequeathed to me a few days only before the preſent ſcene cloſed; I found a few ſtrictures on this paſſage of St. Paul to the Philippians, from which I have added one or two above, marked with

and religion," which are printed in vol. ii. p. 137. of Dr. Jebb's works; and which is a circumſtance concerning them, not improper to be ſuggeſted, as it may ſerve to account for their being ſo collected together. With theſe I furniſhed my worthy collegue, Dr. Diſney, to whom the public owe many obligations for his care and labour in arranging and publiſhing this excellent perſon's imperfect but valuable remains, and for the memorials he has given us of him.

(*c*) This frequently appears in his manuſcript papers which he left behind him.

his uſual ſignature and the initials of his name, J.J. And among them was the following memorandum. ‘Mr. Tyrwhitt *(d)* was the firſt who convinced ‘me, that there is in this place a reference to ‘*ſpiritual gifts*, which the Philippian chriſtians ‘made their boaſt of, and which the apoſtle re‘commends to them to apply to their proper ‘end of edification, with due humility and con‘deſcenſion as Jeſus did, who poſſeſſed them in ‘the moſt eminent degree.’

I am the rather glad to mention this anecdote, not only for the deſerved honour it does to one perſon, who will be the leaſt pleaſed with what relates to himſelf in it: but the more, as it ſerves to ſhew the ſingular virtue of the friend, whoſe loſs we muſt ever deplore: who, whilſt he took pleaſure in doing credit to others, by acknowleging any light he received from them, was ſo humble and communicative with reſpect to his own curious knowlege and diſcoveries, particularly in what related to the holy ſcriptures; content to have others enlightened and the truth diſſeminated, himſelf ſhunning the fame and the appearance of it. A temper of mind this, which was in all other reſpects conſpicuous in him, to thoſe who knew

(d) With this gentleman, and with Mr. Lambert, fellow of Trinity college, Dr. Jebb lived on terms of intimate friendſhip, beyond any others.

knew him intimately; and which will particularly fit him for that future world, revealed to the chriſtian, where happineſs will be in proportion to men's benevolent diſpoſitions and preference of others to themſelves.

Hebrews i. 1. 2.

Inſtead of	read
God——hath in theſe laſt days, ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds.	*God——hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed* Lord *of all things*; for whom *alſo he* conſtituted the ages.

Heir of all things is the ſame as lord, and the latter word is only adopted as more agreeable to the general language of the apoſtles concerning their divine maſter, Acts ii. 14. 36. Peter, with all the other apoſtles, tell their countrymen, *God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both* Lord *and* Chriſt. Phil. ii. 9—11. *God hath exalted him—and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus, the Chriſt, is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.* The ſame thing is expreſſed Eph. i. 22. *God hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.* It is alſo only what our Saviour himſelf declares

after his reſurrection, Matth. xxviii. 18. *All power* is given *unto me in heaven and in earth*; which is explained by what follows to be only a power to propagate the goſpel with effect throughout the world.

By *all things* here, of which he is ſaid to be made lord, is to be underſtood, not all things in the univerſe, as ſome would make it, or all things upon this earth, but all ſuch things as the (*e*) Son here mentioned, *i. e.* the Meſſiah, the great anointed prophet had to do with; which are only what related to the goſpel and the eternal ſalvation of mankind.

— *For whom alſo he conſtituted the ages*; not (*f*) *by whom alſo he made the worlds.* For the ſacred writer could not ſpeak here of the creation of the natural ſyſtem, becauſe he all along afterwards deſcribes the holy Jeſus, as merely a human being, extraordinarily diſtinguiſhed by almighty God. Moreover, after having ſaid, that the Son was made

(*e*) All who take their ideas and knowlege from the ſcriptures, do and will find, that *the Son, Son of God*, is only another way of ſpeaking to expreſs the Chriſt, the Meſſiah.

(*f*) Dr. Doddridge prefers the rendering of the paſſage, *conſtituted the ages*: and yet he alſo inſerts in his paraphraſe, *created the worlds.*

made lord of all things, it is not likely that he should add, that he created them. Also, if the sacred writer wished to teach that Christ was in any fashion the creator of the world, there was other customary language in which he would have been likely to express it; and which would have had no ambiguity in it. So that if any creation is here intended, it must be the new creation, the reformation of all things by the gospel.

But the term, αιωνας, which we translate worlds, signifies also *ages (g)*, certain periods in which there were different dispensations of divine providence to mankind, which made way for the gospel. And the preposition δια, *(h)* being used to signify

(g) 'Whether by αιωνες, *ages*, the several dispensations mankind were under from first to last,——be here meant; this seems visibly the sense of the place, that all these dispensations, in the several ages of the church, were all, by the pre-ordination of God's purpose, regulated and constituted in Christ Jesus our Lord; that is, with regard to Christ, who was appointed lord and head over all.' Locke on Ephesians, iii. 11.

(h) Thucydides. Ed. Oxon, 1696. Lib. vi. p. 382. —δι ουπερ παντα εκινδυνευον. 'They were determined first to 'take revenge on him, δι ουπερ on whose account, they ex-'posed themselves to all hazards.' This may illustrate, Heb. i. 2. by shewing, that δια with a genitive is expressive of a final cause, or the object in view.

The

ſignify, not only the inſtrument, but the object in view. The clauſe before us may very properly be rendered, *for*, or *on account of whom*, he conſtituted the ages.

Hebrews i. 5.

Inſtead of	read
For unto which of the angels ſaid he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.	*For unto which of the angels ſaid he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I* beſtowed a new being upon *thee.*

The apoſtle Paul, in Acts xiii. 33. teaches us to underſtand theſe words as expreſſive of our Lord's being raiſed to life; and therefore in that place and here, the harſh idiom of the hebrew language, *begotten,*

The above came from Mr. Belſham, in a letter to Dr. Prieſtley, and was communicated to me ſome time ago.

This gentleman has ſince been added to the other worthy and reſpectable tutors of New College, Hackney, near London, as reſident tutor, at their particular deſire; and, for ſuperior judgment, knowlege, and the happy art of communicating it to others, together with an admirable talent of gaining youth to the love of ſcience and virtue, he is an acquiſition of which that promiſing noble Seminary may well make it's boaſt.

begotten, ought to be rejected, and a proper engliſh word be uſed of an equivalent ſenſe.

The term *begotten* alſo here and in the following inſtance, is rejected, as it ſerves to countenance the unſcriptural unintelligible doctrine of Chriſt's prior or eternal generation before he was born of his mother Mary.

Hebrews i. 6.

Inſtead of	read
And again, when he bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the world, he ſaith, And let all the angels of God worſhip him.	*And again, when he bringeth* the well-beloved *into the world, he ſaith, And let all the angels of God* do homage *to him.*

The juſtneſs and propriety of theſe two alterations in this verſe, hath been accounted for before.

John iii. 16. 18.

Inſtead of	read
For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in	*For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his* moſt beloved *Son, that whoſoever believeth in him*

him

him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.	*ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*
He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.	*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the* moſt beloved *Son of God.*

Hebrews i. 8.

Inſtead of	read
Unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.	*Unto the Son he ſaith,* God is thy throne *for ever and ever.*

i. e. the eſtabliſher of thy throne: thy ſupport. All muſt agree that the words in the original equally admit this tranſlation. And thoſe who are for having Chriſt here to be called God, a ſtile never once uſed concerning him, do not ſufficiently conſider, that even upon that ſuppoſition, he is at the ſame time, in the next verſe, declared to have a God over him, who made him whatever he was.

Hebrews ii. 14.

Inſtead of	read
Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf took part of the ſame.	*Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe* partook *of the ſame.*

i. e. Chriſt was a man, altogether mortal, like the reſt of mankind. *Hardy*'s note is very proper. ‘ *Ipſe ſimiliter particeps factus eſt eorundem*; i. e. mortalis homo, et miſeriis obnoxius.

Hebrews ii. 16.

Inſtead of	read
For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.	*For verily he* did not deliver *angels, but he* delivered *the ſeed of Abraham.*

The proper meaning of the word in the original, επιλαμβανεται, is, to lay hold of any one to help them. So that the taking our nature upon him, as if Chriſt had been poſſeſſed of another nature before, is a thing quite beſide the apoſtle's meaning. Beauſobre, whom I have followed, thus renders the words. ‘ Car il n' eſt pas le libérateur ‘ des anges, mais de la poſtérité d'Abraham.'

1 John i. 1. 2. 3.

Inſtead of	read
That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it, and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you, that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us) That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you.	We publiſh unto you, concerning *the word of life*, him, who *was from the beginning*, whom *we have heard*, whom *we have ſeen with our eyes*, whom *we have looked upon, and our hands have handled; (For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen, and bear witneſs and ſhew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us.)* Him whom *we have ſeen and heard*, we do publiſh *unto you.*

It is with diffidence that I propoſe this new tranſlation of the entrance of this epiſtle, though I am myſelf perſuaded of it's being a juſt repreſentation of the meaning of St. John, for the reaſons given above, in the explanation of the preface to his goſpel: But let others judge of it.

It

It may be proper however, here to mention, that the apoſtle is here oppoſing ſome early chriſtians, who out of miſtaken regards for Chriſt, and the prejudices of their philoſophy, would not allow him to have been a real ſuffering mortal, like others. And that this was the firſt corruption of the true doctrine concerning Chriſt, cannot be denied on any grounds of truth.

—*from the beginning*] is not, from the beginning of time; but, as our apoſtle himſelf is found to explain it, from the beginning of our Saviour's miniſtry, at which time, he might properly be called the Chriſt, that is, the anointed prophet, on account of the deſcent of the holy ſpirit upon him, to qualify him for his great office, in the abundant gifts of a divine wiſdom and power then firſt conferred upon him. And a circumſtance of this kind was very juſtly urged againſt theſe men, who, in a ſtrange way, made Chriſt *(i)* a ſeparate preexiſtent ſpirit, united to the man Jeſus.

CONCLUSION.

(i) Theſe men did not attend to thoſe words of St. Paul, 1 Tim. iii. 5. *There is one God and one mediator* or miniſter, *between God and man*, the man *Jeſus Chriſt*: for there Chriſt Jeſus is called expreſsly, one ſingle perſon of the human race. But St. Paul here likewiſe directly declares, in words which no one can miſtake or pervert, that Chriſt Jeſus was as ſurely a mortal man ανθρωπος, one of the human race, as all the reſt of us are mortal men, ανθρωποι, and that he had no other origin, was in no other claſs of beings, was no more preexiſtent, than we are.

And

CONCLUSION.

It has now been manifeſted, in many inſtances, to what a degree our preſent engliſh tranſlation of the ſcriptures, miſrepreſents them, and miſleads thoſe thouſands and ten thouſands, who are forced to rely upon it; eſpecially by contributing to introduce among chriſtians, two other perſons as Gods, and to be worſhiped, Jeſus, and the holy Ghoſt, putting them upon an equality with the ſupreme Father of all; with HIM, whom the bleſſed Jeſus ſtiled his God and Father, and the only true God; whom he always worſhiped himſelf, and directed all others to worſhip him only.

Thoſe chriſtians, who with Moſes and the prophets of old, and their deſcendants, the preſent

And the apoſtle, by this declaration, here, as indeed every where elſe, but here particularly, defines and publiſhes Chriſt to have been a mortal man, and God in no ſenſe whatſoever, by deſcribing him as a diſtinct perſon and agent, acting betwixt God and man. The antient unitarians pointed to this text, among many others equally ſtrong, to their adverſaries.

preſent jews, believe the Divine Unity in the moſt excluſive abſolute ſenſe; and who have maintained and taught, and maintain and teach, that Jehovah, the Father, is God alone, and to be worſhiped, and no other perſon, neither Jeſus Chriſt nor the holy Ghoſt; they have been almoſt univerſally calumniated, may I not ſay? and ſometimes by learned and good men, as forcing an unnatural ſenſe upon the ſacred writings, as tampering with them at other times, and altering them, to make them ſpeak as they would have them.

But from what has been laid before you in the ſeveral chapters of this work, and the methods of interpretation of the ſacred volume purſued in it, you will perceive, I truſt, how much theſe chriſtians have been miſrepreſented. For, in general, the Unitarians, (or Socinians, as they are ſometimes called, though differing much from Socinus, eſpecially in his worſhip of Chriſt) they not only profeſs to follow, but actually do follow the ſcriptures only; and form their ſentiments of God, and Chriſt, and of the divine revealed will, from them only. Theſe they ſtudy

by night and by day, with a ſingle view to find out what they teach. And if in any thing they miſtake, or miſapprehend their meaning, they truſt that they are ready, and will rejoice to correct their errors.

They are, however, abſolutely perſuaded, upon the firmeſt grounds, ſuch as have been laid down in this work, *viz.* the teſtimony of Moſes, of Solomon, and the antient prophets; the teſtimony of Jeſus, and of all his apoſtles;

1. That there is but one God, one Perſon, who is God; *namely*, Jehovah, the Father alone.

2. That the holy Jeſus was a man of the jewiſh nation, raiſed up and commiſſioned by the almighty Father to teach his will, and to bring all mankind to virtue and eternal happineſs.

And although there be thoſe who are unwilling to admit the light of theſe great truths; yet the clouds of prejudice are daily vaniſhing, and the evidence of them is continually coming forth ſo bright and irreſiſtible, that there can be no doubt of the time approximating, when the ſore ſtain and diſgrace of *polytheiſm* will be wiped away from the

the chriſtian name, and the firſt of all the divine commandments, promulged by Moſes, and adopted and confirmed by Jeſus Chriſt, (which in the very terms excludes every perſon from being God but one) will be univerſally acknowleged and obeyed by chriſtians, *viz.* Deut. vi. 4. Mark xii. 29—— JEHOVAH is *our God*, JEHOVAH *alone*. Exod. xx. 2. 3. *I am* JEHOVAH *thy God. Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before* ME.

JEHOVAH reigns, let every nation hear,
And at his footſtool bow with holy fear;
Let heaven's high arches eccho with his name,
And the wide peopled earth his praiſe proclaim--
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
But oh! our higheſt notes the theme debaſe,
And ſilence is our leaſt injurious praiſe:
Ceaſe, ceaſe your ſongs, the daring flight controul,
Revere him in the ſtilneſs of the ſoul:
With ſilent duty meekly bend before him,
And deep within your inmoſt hearts adore him.

MRS. BARBAULD.

F I N I S.

N. B. The reader is desired to blot out the paragraph at the end of the Preface to my former Address, as I was misinformed in what is there mentioned relating to the Bishop of Exeter; and Bishops Yorke and Porteus were the only present english Bishops, who, when in inferior stations, were desirous to engage their spiritual superiors, to a revisal of the articles, liturgy, and forms of subscription of the church.

ERRATA.

Page v. l. 12, dele *His.*
x. l. 3, from bottom, for *premier* read *premiers.*
xvi. at the bottom of the page, and end of the note, insert; *Let us not be* Hottentots *in our religion!*
xxv. l. 4, after *subject*, put a *semicolon*;
49. for life of *Christ*, read life of *Socinus.*
80. for ἑαυτω, read ἐν αὐτω.
122. last line, read *as* will be seen shortly.
155. l. 8, from bottom, for *fellow-creature*, read *fellow-worker.*
185. l. 5, from bottom, read, adopted *after him.*
204. l. 1, read, Of the perversion *of the meaning, &c.*
216. l. 6, *dele* for it.
—— —— note *(r)* refers to p. 215.
289. for *God*, read *lord.*
304. l. last but one, for pointed *to*, read pointed *out.*

N. B. There is a repetition of some few of the sections of the first chapter, by mistake: but the sense is not at all affected by it.

INDEX.

The numerals in roman characters refer to the Introduction.

Page

The Acts, St. Luke's ſecond treatiſe; concluſions moſt important from it - xix

Ananias, what he teaches Paul concerning Jeſus Chriſt - - 120

Angel of God, not always a heavenly being; what beſides? - - 162. 165

——— was not Chriſt, but an extraordinary dream, by which the Almighty ſpoke to Jacob at Luz - - 162

Apolles—what he taught the converts to the goſpel, concerning Jeſus Chriſt - 119

Apoſtles—all teſtify, even after his reſurrection, that their maſter Jeſus was only a human creature - - - 88

——— why they always preached him to be ſuch only - - - - 136

——— had one and the ſame God, before they were chriſtians, as afterwards, and no other - - 101. 102. 123

Page

Baptiſmal form, in St. Matthew, no proof of Chriſt being any other than a human creature 18

Barnabas St. teaches Chriſt to have been only a human being - - 113, 114

——— could not be the author of any book that taught otherwiſe - - 136

Begotten, improper language; leads to wrong ideas concerning God and Jeſus Chriſt 262. 299

Benjamin Ben Mordecai—who? falls into ſtrange notions concerning Jeſus Chriſt, which belong only to learned men - 209, 210

Blayney Dr.—a moſt judicious and candid ſcripture critic - - - - 252

Caſtellio, his tranſlation of the preface of St. John's goſpel - - - - 32

Chriſt, how probably affected by his followers making him God, and worſhiping him - xiv

——— could not be God, becauſe without any powers of his own - - 43

——— how *the Father* in him - - 50, 51

——— generally expreſſed himſelf in a figurative ſtile - - - 57

——— they follow his words moſt ſtrictly, who teach him to have been a human creature only - - 75. 305

——— mentioned as one only like others of mankind, after his reſurrection - 86

——— how he is ſometimes ſaid to do things (note *p*) 89

——— from heaven, owns himſelf to have been of human origin - - 120

Chriſt,

Page

Chriſt, his being poſſeſſed of two natures, the abſurdity of - - - 125.

——— the worſhip of—for ſo many hundred years, no proof of his being God, but of the ſloth and ignorance of men xii. xiv. 211, 212

——— what keeps chriſtians in darkneſs concerning him - - 7, 8. 223

——— in *the form of God*, what? - - 285

——— *every knee bowing to him of things in heaven, and things on earth*, &c. what? 291

Chriſtians, cauſe of their diſagreeing for ſo many ages, whether they were to worſhip one God, or more Gods than one - 9

Clarke Dr. miſled by Juſtin Martyr to believe, that it was not the Almighty being, but an inferior God, his repreſentative, who appeared to Moſes, and who afterwards became Chriſt - 207. 209

Clement of Alexandria—his character - - 190

——— copies Juſtin Martyr in making Chriſt a ſecondary God of the Old Teſtament 191, 192

——— a prayer of his to Chriſt - - - 193

——— yet introduces Chriſt joining angels and men, in ſinging praiſes to God - 194

Converts, the firſt heathen to chriſtianity; what was taught them concerning Jeſus Chriſt - - - 113, 114

Cornelius, the firſt heathen convert to the goſpel, by expreſs divine direction; what was taught him concerning Jeſus Chriſt 112, 113

Page

Creation by Jesus Christ—how the apostle Paul is to be understood, when he speaks of it 117, 118. 135

Doctrine of more Gods than one; whence it first came among christians - 221, 222

Doddridge Dr. a very prejudiced interpreter and paraphraser of N. T. - - 42

Ebionites, a name of the first jewish christians 130

Emanuel—what? not a name of Christ - 12

Emlyn, the spuriousness of the text of the 3 witnesses fully established by - - 241

——— his Address to the two houses of Convocation, on their keeping that spurious text in the bible as genuine 242. 245

Error—the first concerning Christ in the apostles' time, was denying him to have been really a man - - - 44

——— among christians, of holding more gods than one, a principal cause of - 53

Evangelists, the 3 former, appear to have lived and died, without knowing their master Christ to have been any other than a human creature - - 23

Eusebius, his time, character, and stile in writing 55. 198, 199

——— his misapplication of scripture (note) 199

——— his manner of proving Christ to be the *Word*, and maker of all things, under the Father - - 200, 201

——— ——— of proving Christ to be an inferior God and agent under the Supreme - - - 202

Eusebius,

Page

Euſebius, his general perverſion of the meaning of the ſcriptures with reſpect to Chriſt 203, 204, 205

Falſe Gods, all others, taught to be by Chriſt, except the Father - - - 266

Fathers Apoſtolic, how to judge of their writings, and of what they ſay with reſpect to Chriſt's preexiſtence - - 184, 185

Fathers, the great uſe of their writings - xxiv

Fulneſs of the Deity—how in Chriſt - - 51

Fulneſs of God—how in chriſtians - - 51

God coming to men, how underſtood by jews - 40

God only, not Chriſt, knoweth the heart 86, 87

Gods two, Euſebius accuſed of holding, in making Chriſt the logos, the Word - 56

Godhead---a word unintelligible, much abuſed, to be rejected when ſpeaking of God 274, 275. 278. 283

Hawkins, Rev. Mr. Bampton-Lecturer, his new and ſingular way of defending the Trinity - - - viii

Heathens at Athens; what it was that St. Paul taught them concerning Jeſus Chriſt 116, 117. 134

Harmony of the goſpels, Le Clerc commended 43

James the apoſtle, knew nothing of Chriſt being God, or of any God but the Father 129, 130

Jebb Dr. John—his character and eminent virtues 292

——— ſingularly qualified for the interpretation of the ſacred writings - - 293

——— his humility in particular - - 294

Page

Jeſus Chriſt was not the God of Abraham, but his ſervant - - - 93

——— is not the God of Chriſtians, but the holy ſervant of that God - 139

——— from heaven, declares himſelf, not God, but one of mankind - - 106

Jews held it madneſs to imagine Chriſt to have been a preexiſtent God, of any kind 153

Ignatius writes againſt thoſe chriſtians, who held Chriſt not to have been truly a man (note) 145

Incarnation, a very wrong title given to the preface of St. John's goſpel, by Dr. Campbell (note) 34

Incarnate the Word became, a very improper tranſlation of John i. 14. by the ſame; miſrepreſenting the meaning of the apoſtle (note) 34

John the apoſtle cenſures thoſe, as in a grievous error, who denied Chriſt to have been truly a human creature - 45. 146

——— aſſerts, that he wrote his goſpel, not to prove his maſter Jeſus to be God, but the great prophet of God, the Chriſt (note) 26

——— had no new doctrine to deliver concerning Chriſt, different from the other evangeliſts - - - 83

——— an argument, that he did not intend to call Chriſt, *the Word*, logos, in the beginning of his goſpel - - 99

Jortin

Page

Jortin Dr. very greatly miſtaken in one inſtance (note) 95

Irenæus copies Juſtin Martyr, in making Chriſt a miniſtring, ſecondary God, at the creation, and afterwards - 188, 189

Jude the apoſtle, teaches that there was one ſovereign Being, who was God alone, and that Jeſus was his prophet, of the jewiſh nation - - - 132

Juſtin Martyr—firſt brought in two Gods among chriſtians - - - xx

——— whence it was that he brought his ſecond God - - - 149

——— was however himſelf far from making this ſecond God equal to the Supreme (note) 122

——— maintained, intirely from his own imagination, that it was Chriſt, to whom God ſpake, when he made the world - 154, 155

——— what it was that made him ſpeak ſo poſitively about Chriſt being this ſecond God - - - 175

——— an inſtance of his weakneſs in thinking that he had a divine gift of interpreting ſcripture - - (note *y*) 177

——— how he came to fancy himſelf inſpired in this reſpect - - - 179

——— was the firſt inventor of the preexiſtence of Chriſt, as a ſecond God and creator 182

——— his character - - 214, &c.

Knowlege

Page

Knowlege of Jesus Christ—which is the most important of all - - 1

——— *who he was*; how this made important 2

——— whence this becomes difficult - 8

Knowing—*no one the Son but the Father*, &c. much mistaken by Justin Martyr and others 61

——— how to be understood - - 64

Locke Mr. unworthily censured - - xvii

Lord in the greek, and in english, an ambiguous word - - 86, 90

——— when it stands for Almighty God, cannot belong to Christ - - 91, 92

——— Jesus Christ; such a Lord only as God hath made him - - 90, 91

Le Clerc, his translation of the preface of St. John's gospel, commended - - 33

Marcion—an early christian, very near the time of the apostles, fell into great errors 132. 187

Marcellus, an unitarian bishop of the 4th century; understood the *word*, the logos, in the preface of St. John's gospel, not as a name of Christ, but an attribute of God - - 55

——— maintained, that there was no other God to be a fellow-worker with God - 155

Mary, Christ's mother, what thoughts she is likely to have of men's stupid worship of her xiv

Matthew the apostle, why not possible for him, at the close of his gospel, to speak of Christ, or of the Holy Spirit, as Gods 17, 18, 19

Moses

Page

Moſes knew nothing of any ſuch god or creator as Chriſt - - - 156

Nazarenes, a name of the firſt jewiſh chriſtians 130

New College, *Hackney*, commended - iii. 298

Old Teſtament, one ſingle perſon only, ſpoken of throughout as God - - 225

Paul St. accuſed of perſuading men to *worſhip* contrary to the law; what intended by it - - 118, 119

——— one paſſage in him, but in the midſt of a thouſand others, deciſive of Chriſt being intirely one of the human ſpecies (note *i*) 303

Pearce Biſhop, his amendment of our engliſh tranſlation of the New Teſtament 110

Peter, together with the reſt of the apoſtles, teaches his countrymen, that the bleſſed Jeſus was only a man of their own nation, gifted with high powers from God - 128

——— and John give their maſter Jeſus, as his higheſt title, that of God's ſervant - 128

——— teaches in his epiſtles, and throughout the gōſpels and Acts, that there was one God, the Father, and that Jeſus Chriſt had his being from him - 130

——— much injured and miſrepreſented by biſhop Hurd, as a believer of a trinity of divine perſons - (note *f*) 131

Polycarp condemns thoſe chriſtians in his time, who denied Chriſt to have been really a man - - (note) 145

Potter Archbiſhop, a weak remark of (note) 193

Page
Prieſtley Dr. his character - - - iv. v
——— the utility of his various writings - vi
Primitive apoſtolic church, what its worſhip? - 139
Pyle Dr. his groundleſs notion of Chriſt, as a ſecondary God, employed in the deſtruction of Sodom - - 161
Right hand of God—what *ſitting at the?* - xii. xiii
Rule for the common chriſtian to know as well as the moſt learned, whether the ſcripture teaches more gods than one - 224, &c.
Servant, Chriſt God's; a common way of ſpeaking of their maſter Jeſus, after his reſurrection, by the apoſtles - 92, 93
Saviour, how Chriſt ſo called, as well as Almighty God - - 247
Solomon knew nothing of Chriſt's preexiſtence, or of his being ſuch a ſecondary god and creator as Juſtin Martyr would make him acquainted with - 172
Son and Holy Spirit, thoſe who worſhip, have different gods from Chriſt's apoſtles - 140
Son of God, Jeſus, how? - (note) 15
Sparrman, his curious account of the force of inveterate prejudice - - (note) xv
Spirit or *Holy Spirit*, always by St. Matthew ſpoken of, as being only the extraordinary power of God - - 15
——— not a divine perſon, but the divine power (note) 17
——— what, *to lie to?* - - 100
——— *blaſphemy of*; what? - - 256
Stephen could not poſſibly invoke Chriſt as God, or as any thing but a human creature 103

Swedenborg

Page

Swedenborg Baron, an inſtance of his weakneſs in believing himſelf inſpired - - 178

Tertullian, his character - - 195

——— manner of interpreting ſcripture - 196

——— and of aſſerting Chriſt's preexiſtence, and of his being the agent of the deity 197

Things in the New Teſtament often put for perſons (note) 47

Tillotſon Archbiſhop, an excellent perſon, how he ſuffered himſelf to be impoſed upon by words without meaning xxvii. xxix.

——— his reflections on the object of prayer - 267

Tranſlators of the bible into engliſh, their unwillingneſs to acknowlege Chriſt to be God's ſervant - - - 269

Trinity, or three divine perſons, without all ſupport from the bible - - 225. 228

Unitarians accuſed of denying the literal and obvious meaning of ſcripture - - 76

——— all chriſtians, jews, and heathens, were at firſt, *i. e.* knew no ſuch gods as Chriſt and the Holy Spirit - 140

——— all chriſtians will become, by attending to the ſcriptures - 229. 235

——— their cruel ſufferings in England at the reformation - - 230. 232

Violence to men's conſciences in the things of religion, how to be looked upon - 230

Watts Dr. a pious, valuable character, lived and died in uncertainty about the object of religious worſhip, whether one God, or more than one - 4—6